

OLIVER GOLDSMITH



Oliver Goldsmith

By
Lord Macaulay

WITH INTRODUCTION, NOTES, CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARIES, &c.,

BY

H. B. Cotterill, M.A.

Editor of 'Selections from the Inferno,' Macaulay's 'Milton,'
Virgil's 'Æneid I. and VI.,' Goethe's 'Iphigenie,' Moswell's 'Four,'
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PREFACE.

In the case of my edition of Macaulay's *Life of Johnson*, notes to this *Life of Goldsmith* consist mainly of illustrative details drawn from writers to whom Macaulay was indebted for his materials.

Macaulay's outlines are, as ever, masterly; but the general effect of his sketch is somewhat meagre and bare compared with that of his *Samuel Johnson*. It does not show the same acquaintance, nor the same sympathy, with the subject. But, in spite of this, it possesses the charm of an artistic composition. It transports us in imagination back to the age of Goldsmith; it brings us and him *menschlich naher*, to use Schiller's fine expression; 'it makes him for us a real living person.' In reading Macaulay's words we become personally interested in Goldsmith; this personal interest excites a desire of closer acquaintance, and makes us welcome every detail which helps to fill up, without blurring, the picture.

Boswell, with whose book he was intimate, was for Macaulay a considerable source of information; for 'honest Goldsmith' is a conspicuous figure on Boswell's canvas. But it was naturally from Goldsmith's biographers that he drew most largely; and he seems to have drawn not from the earliest of these, such as Bishop

Percy and Malone—nor from Prior, who deserves indubitably the first place on account of his original research and scrupulous accuracy—but from the later biographies of Washington Irving and Forster, almost all his facts, and many of his expressions, being derived from these two writers and from Boswell. For this reason—and because they are easily procurable—I have made especial use of Washington Irving's and Forster's accounts of Goldsmith for purposes of illustration, and in case of quotations from Boswell or Goldsmith I have made reference to the 'Globe' Editions, which are fairly inexpensive.

Of the almost innumerable anecdotes and other detail at my disposal, I have winnowed out those which seemed to me to best supplement Macaulay's narrative. These I have tried to so arrange and connect as to fit together with the text, a fairly continuous account.

From the standpoint of 'the shorter the better' the length of my notes, as compared with that of the text, will appear outrageous. But it should be remembered that the object of this edition is not merely to help an examination candidate to get up the text, but to give as complete a picture as possible of Goldsmith to those who may not have time or inclination to work their way through thousands of pages.

I trust that the Chronological Summaries will be of use in affording bird's-eye views of the lives of Goldsmith and Macaulay. In the Introduction I have also given an account of the period of Macaulay's life in which he wrote the series of biographical sketches to which his *Oliver Goldsmith* belongs.

But I should be sorry if by supplying these few facts

I should offer an inducement to anyone not to procure and read, unless he already possesses and has read, that most charming of biographies, the *Life and Letters of Macaulay* by his nephew, Sir George Trevelyan.

H. B. C.

CHÂTEAU-D'OREX,
April, 1904.

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY. I.

GOLDSMITH'S LIFE. 6

1728. Born, Nov. 10th, at Pallas, Ireland.
1730. His father obtains the living of Kilkenny West, and settles at Lissoy.
- 1731-3. Goldsmith taught by Elizabeth Delap.
1734. Taught by Paddy Bryne.
1735. Has the small-pox.
1736. At Mr. Griffin's school, Elphin.
- 1739-41. At Mr. Campbell's school, Athlone.
- 1741-44. At Mr. Hughes' school, Edgeworthstown.
- 1744 (June 11th). Enters Trinity College, Dublin, as Sizar.
1747. His father dies. Goldsmith takes part in riots at College. He gains a prize, holds festivity, is brutally treated by Wilder, runs away, and is brought back by Henry.
- 1749 (Feb. 27th). Takes B.A. degree.
- 1749-52. Three years of idleness at Ballymahon and Lissoy and Pallas.
1751. Rejected as candidate for ordination. Goes off to Cork. Intention of emigrating to America frustrated.
1752. Starts for London to study law. Loses all his money in Dublin gaming-house, and returns.
- 1752 (Autumn). To Edinburgh, where he studies medicine, more or less, for about 18 months.
- 1754 (February). Starts for the Continent. Imprisoned (?) at Newcastle. Arrives at Leyden.

- 1755 (Early spring). Leaves Leyden. Wanders through Holland and Belgium. At Louvain perhaps takes medical degree (M.B.).
1755. At Paris. On the Loire. In Germany (?). In Switzerland. To Padua, where he possibly may have spent some time and have taken a doctor's degree. (But see of 5. 18.)
- 1756 (Feb. 1). Lands at Dover.
1756. In London. Assistant to chemist. Tries to practise as doctor. Proof-reader to Samuel Richardson. In autumn enters as usher at Dr. Milner's school, Peckham.
- 1757 (April-Sept.). Does hack-work for Mr. and Mrs. Griffiths (*Monthly Review*). Quarrels and leaves them. Is in great want. Is visited by his younger brother Charles.
1758. Applies to Dr. Milner and is given temporary charge of the school. In prospect of Indian medical appointment returns to London. Tries to raise money for outfit. Takes room in Green Arbour Court, Breakneck Steps. Writes for both *Monthly* and *Critical*. The Indian appointment lost (Nov.). Applies for post as hospital mate. Rejected at Surgeons' Hall (Dec.).
1759. A struggle for existence as bookseller's hack. Dr. Percy's visit. *Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning* published (March). *The Bee* (Oct. & Nov.). Visited by Smollett and Newbery. Contributes to *British Magazine*.
1760. *Chinese Letters* (*Citizen of the World*) appear in *Public Ledger*. Edits *Ladies' Magazine*, and inserts his *Memoirs of Voltaire*. Moves to the Temple, Wine Office Court.
1761. Makes Johnson's acquaintance (May 31). Foregathers with some of Johnson's circle at the shop of Tom Davies. Meets Boswell (who is as yet unacquainted with Johnson).
1762. Publishes *Chinese Letters* in book form (May), and *Life of Richard Nash* (Oct.). Third share in the *Vicar of Wakefield* (probably still unfinished) sold to Collins, Strahan, & Newbery (Oct. 28). In winter to Islington (Mrs. Fling's).
1763. At Islington. Works at his *History*. Intimacy with Hogarth. 'The Club' founded (or in next spring).
1764. Lodges at Islington, but keeps rooms at Wine Court, Temple. Publishes *History of England in a Series of Letters* (June). Johnson saves Goldsmith from the bailiff by getting 20 (or 60) guineas advanced on the *Vicar*. *The Traveller* published (Dec.).

1765. *Miscellaneous Essays* (dated 1758-65). *Edwin and Angelina*. Attempts to practise as doctor. Takes better rooms in Temple, Garden Court.
1766. Publishes *Vicar of Wakefield*.
1767. For summer at Canonbury Tower, Islington. Works at *Roman History*. On return to Garden Court is visited by Parson Scott. John Newbery dies.
1768. *The Good-natured Man* at Covent Garden Theatre (Jan. 29). Buys lease of apartment in Brick Court, Temple. His brother Henry dies (May). In summer at 'Shoemaker's Paradise,' a cottage at Edgware. Royal Academy founded. Goldsmith elected Professor of Ancient History.
1769. Undertakes to write *Natural History* (Feb.). Publishes *Roman History* (May). Gets to know the Hornecks.
1770. Publishes *The Deserted Village* (May). Visits Paris with the Hornecks. *Life of Parnell*, and *Life of Bolingbroke*. His mother dies (Sept.). Spends the Christmas at Gosforth with Lord Clare.
1771. Writes the *Haunch of Venison* (published 1776). At Royal Academy dinner (April). In summer again at Edgware, where Boswell visits his lodging. Publishes *History of England* (Aug.). Spends Christmas with the Bunburys and Hornecks at Barton.
1772. *Abridgment of Roman History*. At Edgware works at *Natural History* and his new play.
1773. *She Stoops to Conquer* at Covent Garden (March 15). Works at *Grecian History*. Plans an *Universal Dictionary*, but gives it up. Spends Christmas again with Bunburys and *Jessamy Bride* at Barton.
1774. On account of increasing ill-health intends to sell lease of his Temple rooms. In March is at Edgware, where he works at *Natural History* and *Grecian History*, and writes most of *Retaliation* (all published after his death). Returns to London. Dies on April 4th.

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY. 'II.

MACAULAY'S LIFE.

1800. Thomas Babington, son of Zachary Macaulay and Elisabeth (née Selina Mills), born, Oct. 25th, at the Manor House, Rothley Temple, near Leicester, the residence of his uncle, Mr. Babington.
1812. Sent to private school at Little Shelford, near Cambridge. The school removed in 1814 to Aspenden Hall, near Buntingford. He remains under charge of Mr. Preston, the headmaster, until 1818. About 1816 was his first appearance in print—an anonymous letter sent to his father's *Christian Observer*, in which he scandalised the readers of that journal by eulogising Fielding and Smollett.
1818. Goes into residence at Trinity College, Cambridge.
- 1821-3. Gains a Craven Scholarship, Prize for Latin Declamation, and two Chancellor's medals for English verse. Is 'plucked' for the Mathematical Tripos, and thus prevented from competing for the Chancellor's medals for Classics—then the highest test of scholarship.
- 1823-4. Writes for Charles Knight's *Quarterly Magazine*: two battle-pieces in verse, *Irry and Nasby*; the *Conversation between Cowley and Milton*; *Criticisms on Italian writers (Dante, Petrarch)*, etc.
1824. His father fails in business. Macaulay takes pupils and determines to retrieve the loss, and to help his brothers and sisters. Elected Fellow of Trinity College. Is asked to write for the *Edinburgh Review* (founded 1802). Makes his first public speech before an Anti-slavery Meeting.
1825. His *Essay on Milton* excites a sensation in literary circles.
1826. Called to the bar, and joins the Northern circuit, but with no serious intention of adopting the law as his profession.
1827. *Essay on Machiavelli*.
1828. Is made a Commissioner of Bankruptcy under Wellington's administration—'a rare piece of luck' considering Macaulay's extreme anti-Toryism. He longs to be in Parliament, 'his heart and soul being filled' by the repeal of the Test Act, the Emancipation of the Catholics, and other such questions. *Essays on Hallam's Const. Hist. and Dryden*.
1829. *Essays on James Mill*. The Catholic Emancipation Bill is proposed by the Duke, and becomes law.

1830. Offered by Lord Lansdowne a seat for the borough of Calne. Maiden speech in Parliament on Jewish Disabilities. Visits Paris. Essay on *Montgomery's Poems*.
1831. Invited to stand for Leeds. Essays on *Boswell's Johnson* and *Byron*.
1832. Speeches on the Reform Bill. Elected a Commissioner and then Secretary of the Board of Control. Member for Leeds in the Reformed Parliament.
1833. Essay on *Horace Walpole*. Elected Member of the Supreme Council of India.
1834. First Essay on *Chatham*. Arrives in India, with his sister Hannah, who soon after marries Mr. Trevelyan.
1835. President of Committee of Public Education (India). Essay on *Mackintosh's Revolution*.
1837. As President of Law Commission, drafts Penal Code. Papers on Education, Press, etc., and indefatigable study, especially of the Classics. Essay on *Bacon*.
1838. Returns to England. Essay on *Temple*. Plots his *History*. Tour in Italy. At Rome has the offer from Lord Melbourne of the Judge-Advocateship, which he declines.
1839. In London. Essay on *Gladstone*. M.P. for Edinburgh and Secretary of War.
1840. Essays on *Clive* and *von Ranke*. Settles in the 'Albany.'
- 1841-2. Essays on *Warren Hastings* and *Frederic the Great*. On dissolution of Parliament re-elected for Edinburgh. *Lays of Ancient Rome*.
1843. Essays republished. Essay on *Addison*. Trip to the Loire.
1844. In Holland. Second Essay on *Chatham*.
1846. Paymaster-General of the Army. Re-elected as Member for Edinburgh.
1847. Parliament again dissolved. Macaulay defeated at Edinburgh, and retires into private life, devoting himself to his *History*.
1848. Elected Lord Rector of Glasgow University. First two volumes of *History* published.
1852. Re-elected for Edinburgh. Serious illness. Visit to Edinburgh. Speaks his last words in the House of Commons.
1854. Draws up Report on Competitive Examinations. Resides in cottage at Ditton Marsh. D.C.L. Oxford. [During later years was member of Academies of Munich, Turin, and Utrecht; received Orders of Merit etc.; was President of various Philosophical and other Institutions, Trustee of British Museum, Professor of Ancient Literature to the Royal Academy etc. etc.]

1855. Third and fourth volumes of *History* published—the 'whole weight of the edition is 56 tons.'
1857. Failing health. Resigns his seat for Edinburgh. Settles at Holly Lodge, Campden Hill, where he has his 'little paradise' of shrubs and turf.
- 1855-8. Biographies of Johnson, Goldsmith, Bunyan, A'berbury, and Pitt in the *Encycl. Brit.*
1857. High Steward of the Borough of Cambridge. Created Baron Macaulay of Rothley.
1859. Visits English Lakes and Scotland. Seriously ill towards end of year. On Dec. 28, 'musters strength to dictate a letter to a poor curate enclosing 'twenty-five pounds,' and a few hours later dies.

INTRODUCTION.

MACAULAY'S *Oliver Goldsmith* was one of five biographical articles which he contributed to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. The other four were on Atterbury, Bunyan, Johnson, and William Pitt. These *Lives* were written for the eighth edition of the *Encyclopædia*, which was published between 1854 and 1860.

As to the exact date at which these *Lives* were written, Sir G. Trevelyan gives us no information, except in regard to the last, that of William Pitt. This work, which fills about seventy octavo pages, was in hand for three-quarters of a year, *viz.*, from November 1857, when Macaulay noted in his diary that the plan of a good character of Pitt was forming in his mind, until the 9th of August, 1858, when he made this entry: 'I finished and sent off the paper which caused me so much trouble. I began it, I see, in last November. What a time to have been dawdling over such a trifle!'

As the *Lives* were doubtless supplied in alphabetical order, the *Samuel Johnson* was probably written in 1856, and the *Oliver Goldsmith* in the early part of the same year, or in 1855.

• During the last three or four years of his life Macaulay wrote comparatively little. He was, as will be seen from

the following sketch of this period, often in a state of health which made all writing impossible. From time to time, however, he worked at the continuation of his *History*, and it was doubtless with the prospect—faint and ever fainter—of some day treating the age of the Georges that his mind dwelt once more with a revived interest on the subjects of the three last of his monographs.

Sir G. Trevelyan quotes from Mr. Adam Black, the then proprietor of the *Encyclopaedia*, as follows: 'Macaulay had ceased to write for the reviews for other periodicals, though often earnestly solicited to do so. It is entirely to his friendly feeling that I am indebted for these literary gems, which could not have been purchased with money; and it is but justice to his memory that I should record, as one of the many instances of the kindness and generosity of his heart, that he made it a stipulation of his contributing to the *Encyclopaedia*, that remuneration should not be so much as mentioned.'

IN December 1855 appeared the second instalment of Macaulay's *History of England from the accession of James II.* The success of these third and fourth volumes, outrivalled even that of the first two. As regards bulk of printed matter and financial results such success had never been attained by any edition of any work in any country. The twenty-five thousand copies of which the edition consisted—fifty-six tons in weight—were all ordered before the day of publication, and within a few weeks a cheque for £20,000 was handed over to the author by the publishers—'a fact,'

says Macaulay, 'quite unprecedented in the history of the book trade.'

But this success had been dearly bought. From the summer of 1854 until the autumn of 1855 his *History* had been, as he describes it in the preface to his collected Speeches, the one business and pleasure of his life. He had worked, says Sir J. Trevelyan, harder and ever harder. 'He had gone to his daily labours without intermission and without reluctance, until his allotted task had been accomplished. . . . His labour, though a labour of love, was immense. He almost gave up letter-writing; he quite gave up society; and at last he had not leisure even for his diary.'

How severe had been the strain on his enfeebled health is evident from the fact that, whereas on every former occasion the termination of any such task had been the signal for the commencement of another, 'in 1856 summer succeeded to spring and gave place to autumn, before he again took pen in hand.' His diary, moreover, at this period gives many signs of failing vigour. He constantly speaks of his health as confining him to his room, and as 'very indifferent.' In spite of his courage, there is a tone of anxiety and foreboding. 'I have no pain,' he writes. 'My faculties are unimpaired. My spirits are very seldom depressed, and I am not without hopes of being set up again.'

This same year (1856) saw two important changes in Macaulay's external life, both caused by his need of rest. In January he resigned his seat for Edinburgh, feeling that he could no longer 'reasonably expect to be ever again capable of performing, even in an imperfect manner, those duties which the public has a right to

expect from every member of the House of Commons'; and in May he gave up his rooms in the 'Albany,' where he had resided for fifteen years, and retired to a little house with a garden (Holly Lodge), in a quiet part of Campden Hill.

In the late summer of this year (1856) he was in Italy—at Milan, Verona, and Venice—where he found much to interest him in pictures, architecture, antiquities, and Italian literature. It was scarcely a rest from intellectual activity, but was, at least, a complete change; and he seems to have so far regained his vigour of mind that soon after his return to England he made a serious attempt to set to work at the continuation of his history. On the first of October 1856 he entered this note in his diary: 'Wrote a sheet of foolscap—the first of Part iii. God knows whether I shall ever finish that part. I begin it with little heart or hope.'

The attempt, made with such effort and such foreboding, was short-lived. Again and again he set to work, and ever again the pen fell, as it were, from his weary hand. 'I find it difficult,' he says in February of 1857, 'to settle to my work. This is an old malady of mine. . . . Of late I have felt this impotence more than usual. The chief reason, I believe, is the great doubt which I feel whether I shall live long enough to finish another volume of my book.' Month after month now passed by, and in the next summer (1857) we find this note: 'How the days steal away, and nothing done! I think often of Johnson's lamentations repeated every Easter over his own idleness. . . . Often have I felt this morbid incapacity to work, but never so long and so strong as of late;—the natural effect of age and ease.'

Then during a short period he appears to have made a little progress with the book. On July 14th he notes that he 'wrote a good deal' on the 'Darien affair' of 1699. 'The humour,' he says, 'has returned, and I shall wog it to continue.'

But it was not easy to woo. Gradually and unwillingly, says Sir G. Trevelyan, Macaulay 'acquiesced in the conviction that he must submit to leave untold that very portion of English history which he was competent to treat as no man again will treat it.' Instead of extending his *History*, as he had at first intended, to the accession of William the Fourth, he began to realise that he might be 'well content to be assured that he would live to carry it down to the death of his hero, William of Orange.' He had no longer, he said, 'any real expectation of ever being able to even get to the Georges.'

This foreboding was fulfilled. He read much and planned much. He travelled, abroad and in Scotland. He even spoke once in public—at Cambridge, where he had been elected High Steward—and he intended to speak, though he never did speak, in the House of Lords, after taking his seat as peer. But that which had once been the 'business and pleasure of his life,' was put aside from day to day and from month to month. Now and then, indeed, during the brief remainder of his life he added a few pages to his great work but not only did he fail to get so far as to the Georges; he did not reach even the death of William of Orange and the reign of Queen Anne. Just a fortnight before his death (December, 1859) he made this entry in his diary: 'Finished at last the session of

1699-1700.' Two days later great weakness supervened, caused by heart failure, and on December the 28th he died.

Sir G. Trevelyan remarks that the conscientious and unsparing industry of Macaulay's former days brought him this inestimable reward—that the quality of his productions remained the same as ever, in spite of the rapid decline in his physical strength. 'Instead of writing worse,' he says, 'Macaulay only wrote less.' Perhaps we may go further. Perhaps it may be safely asserted that, instead of writing worse, Macaulay wrote towards the end not only less, but also better. And this seems really Sir G. Trevelyan's opinion, although he applies to these 'literary gems' a rather strange standard of literary value when he says that 'the five little essays are everything which an article in an Encyclopædia should be.' Surely they are something more than this.

'The reader,' he continues, 'as he travels softly and swiftly along, congratulates himself on having lighted upon what he regards as a most fascinating literary or political memoir; but the student, on a closer examination, discovers that every fact, and date, and circumstance is distinctly and faithfully recorded in its due chronological sequence. Macaulay's belief about himself as a writer was that he improved to the last; and the question of the superiority of his later over his earlier manner may securely be staked upon a comparison between the article on Johnson in the *Edinburgh Review* and the article on Johnson in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. The latter of the two is indeed a model of

that which its eminent subject¹ pronounced to be the essential qualification of a biographer—the art of writing trifles with dignity.’

¹ Dr. Hill (4. 34) quotes from Warner as follows: ‘Mr. Fowke once observed to Dr. Johnson that, in his opinion, the Doctor’s literary strength lay in writing biography, in which he infinitely exceeded all his contemporaries. “Sir,” said Johnson, “I believe that is true. The dogs don’t know how to write trifles with dignity.”’

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OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH, one of the most pleasing English writers of the eighteenth century, was of a Protestant and Saxon family, which had been long settled in Ireland, and which had, like most other Protestant and Saxon families, been, in troubled times, harassed and put in fear by the native population. His father, Charles Goldsmith, studied in the reign of Queen Anne at the diocesan school of Elphin, became attached to the daughter of the schoolmaster, married her, took orders, and settled at a place called Pallas in the county of Longford. There he with difficulty supported his wife and children on what he could earn, partly as a curate and partly as a farmer.

At Pallas Oliver Goldsmith was born in November, 1728. That spot was then, for all practical purposes, almost as remote from the busy and splendid capital in which his later years were passed, as any clearing in Upper Canada or any sheep-walk in Australasia now is. Even at this day these enthusiasts who venture to make a pilgrimage to the birth-place of the poet are forced to perform the latter part of their journey on foot. The hamlet lies far from any high road, on a dreary plain which, in wet weather, is often a lake. The lanes would break up any jaunting-car to pieces; and there are mts and sloughs through which the most strongly built wheels cannot be dragged.

While Oliver was still a child, his father was presented to a living worth about £200 a year, in the county of West-

meath. The family accordingly quitted their cottage in the wilderness for a spacious house on a frequented road, near the village of Lissoy. Here the boy was taught his letters by a maid-servant, and was sent in his seventh year to a village school kept by an old quartermaster on half-pay, who professed to teach nothing but reading, writing, and arithmetic, and who had an inexhaustible fund of stories about ghosts, banshees and fairies, about the great Rapparee chiefs, Baldearg O'Donnell and gallant Hogan, and about the
 10 exploits of Peterborough and Stanhope, the surprise of Morjuich, and the glorious disaster of Brihuega. 'This man must have been of the Protestant religion; but he was of the aboriginal race, and not only spoke the Irish language, but could pour forth unpremeditated Irish verses. Oliver early became, and through life continued to be, a passionate admirer of the Irish music, and especially of the compositions of Cardan, some of the last notes of whose harp he heard. It ought to be added that Oliver though by birth one of the Englishry, and though connected by numerous
 20 ties with the Established Church, never showed the least sign of that contemptuous antipathy with which, in his days, the ruling minority in Ireland too generally regarded the subject majority. So far indeed was he from sharing in the opinions and feelings of the caste to which he belonged, that he conceived an aversion to the Glorious and Immortal Memory, and, even when George the Third was on the throne, maintained that nothing but the restoration of the banished dynasty could save the country.

From the humble academy kept by the old soldier Goldsmith was removed in his ninth year. He went to several
 30 grammar-schools, and acquired some knowledge of the ancient languages. His life at this time seems to have been far from happy. He had, as appears from the admirable portrait of him at Knowle, features harsh even to ugliness. The small-pox had set its mark on him with more than usual severity. His stature was small, and his limbs ill put

together. Among boys little tenderness is shown to personal defects; and the ridicule excited by poor Oliver's appearance was heightened by a peculiar simplicity and a disposition to blunder which he retained to the last. He became the common butt of boys and masters, was pointed at as a fright in the playground, and flogged as a dunce in the schoolroom. When he had risen to eminence, those who had once derided him ransacked their memory for the events of his early years, and recited repartees and couplets which had dropped from him, and which, though little noticed at the time, were supposed, a quarter of a century later, to indicate the powers which produced the Vicar of Wakefield and the Deserted Village.

In his seventeenth year Oliver went up to Trinity College, Dublin, as a sizar. The sizars paid nothing for food and tuition, and very little for lodging; but they had to perform some menial services from which they have long been relieved. They swept the court: they carried up the dinner to the fellows' table, and changed the plates and poured out the ale of the rulers of the society. Goldsmith was quartered, not alone, in a garret, on the window of which his name, scrawled by himself, is still read with interest. From such garrets many men of less parts than his have made their way to the woolstack or to the episcopal bench. But Goldsmith, while he suffered all the humiliations, threw away all the advantages, of his situation. He neglected the studies of the place, stood low at the examinations, was turned down to the bottom of his class for playing the buffoon in the lecture-room, was severely reprimanded for pumping on a constable, and was caned by a tutor for giving a ball in the attic story of the college to some gay youths and damsels from the city.

While Oliver was leading at Dublin a life divided between squalid distress and squalid dissipation, his father died, leaving a mere pittance. The youth obtained his bachelor's degree, and left the university. During some time the

humble dwelling to which his widowed mother had retired was his home. He was now in his twenty-first year; it was necessary that he should do something; and his education seemed to have fitted him to do nothing but to dress himself in gaudy colours, of which he was as fond as a magpie, to take a hand at cards, to sing Irish airs, to play the flute, to angle in summer, and to tell ghost stories by the fire in winter. He tried five or six professions in turn without success. He applied for ordination; but, as he applied in
 10 scarlet clothes, he was speedily turned out of the episcopal palace. He then became tutor in an opulent family, but soon quitted his situation in consequence of a dispute about pay. Then he determined to emigrate to America. His relations, with much satisfaction, saw him set out for Cork on a good horse, with thirty pounds in his pocket. But in six weeks he came back on a miserable hack, without a penny, and informed his mother that the ship in which he had taken his passage, having got a fair wind while he was at a party of pleasure, had sailed without him. Then he
 20 resolved to study the law. A generous kinsman advanced fifty pounds. With this sum Goldsmith went to Dublin, was enticed into a gaming-house, and lost every shilling. He then thought of medicine. A small purse was made up; and in his twenty-fourth year he was sent to Edinburgh. At Edinburgh he passed eighteen months in nominal attendance on lectures, and picked up some superficial information about chemistry and natural history. Thence he went to Leyden, still pretending to study physics. He left that celebrated university, the third university at which he had
 30 resided, in his twenty-seventh year, without a degree, with the merest smattering of medical knowledge, and with no property but his clothes and his flute. His flute, however, proved a useful friend. He rambled on foot, through Flanders, France, and Switzerland, playing tunes which everywhere set the peasantry dancing, and which often procured for him a supper and a bed. He wandered as far as Italy.

His musical performances, indeed, were not to the taste of the Italians; but he contrived to live on the alms which he obtained at the gates of convents. It should, however, be observed that the stories which he told about this part of his life ought to be received with great caution; for strict veracity was never one of his virtues; and a man who is ordinarily inaccurate in narration is likely to be more than ordinarily inaccurate when he talks about his own travels. Goldsmith, indeed, was so regardless of truth as to assert in print that he was present at a most interesting conversation 10 between Voltaire and Fontenelle, and that this conversation took place in Paris. Now it is certain that Voltaire never was within a hundred leagues of Paris during the whole time which Goldsmith passed on the Continent.

● In 1756 the wanderer landed at Dover, without a shilling, without a friend, and without a calling. He had, indeed, if his own unsupported evidence may be trusted, obtained from the University of Padua a doctor's degree; but this dignity proved utterly useless to him. In England his flute was not in request: there were no convents; and he was forced to 20 have recourse to a series of desperate expedients. He turned strolling player; but his face and figure were ill suited to the boards even of the humblest theatre. He pounded drugs and ran about London with phials for charitable chemists. ● He joined a swarm of beggars, which made its nest in Axe Yard. He was for a time usher of a school, and felt the miseries and humiliations of this situation so keenly that he thought it a promotion to be permitted to earn his bread as a bookseller's hack; but he soon found the new yoke more galling than the old one, and 30 was glad to become an usher again. He obtained a medical appointment in the service of the East India Company; but the appointment was speedily revoked. Why it was revoked we are not told. ● The subject was one on which he never liked to talk. It is probable that he was incompetent to perform the duties of the place. Then he presented himself

at Surgeons' Hall for examination, as mate to a naval hospital. Even to so humble a post he was found unequal. By this time the schoolmaster whom he had served for a morsel of food and the third part of a bed was no more. Nothing remained but to return to the lowest drudgery of literature. Goldsmith took a garret in a miserable Court, to which he had to climb from the brink of Fleet Ditch by a dizzy ladder of flagstones called Breakneck Steps. The court and the ascent have long disappeared; but old
 10 Londoners will remember both. Here, at thifty, the unlucky adventurer sat down to toil like a galley-slave.

In the succeeding six years he sent to the press some things which have survived and many which have perished. He produced articles for reviews, magazines, and newspapers; children's books which, bound in gilt paper and adorned with hideous woodcuts, appeared in the window of the once far-famed shop at the corner of Saint Paul's Church-yard; An Inquiry into the State of Polite Learning in Europe, which, though of little or no value, is still reprinted among
 20 his works; a Life of Beau Nash, which is not reprinted, though it well deserves to be so; a superficial and incorrect, but very readable, History of England, in a series of letters purporting to be addressed by a nobleman to his son; and some very lively and amusing Sketches of London Society, in a series of letters purporting to be addressed by a Chinese traveller to his friends. All these works were anonymous; but some of them were well known to be Goldsmith's; and he gradually rose in the estimation of the booksellers for whom he drudged. He was, indeed, emphatically a popular
 30 writer. For accurate research or grave disquisition he was not well qualified by nature or by education. He knew nothing accurately: his reading had been desultory; nor had he meditated deeply on what he had read. He had seen much of the world; but he had noticed and retained little more of what he had seen than some grotesque incidents and characters which had happened to strike his

fancy. But, though his mind was very scantily stored with materials, he used what materials he had in such a way as to produce a wonderful effect. There have been many great writers; but perhaps no writer was ever more uniformly agreeable. His style was always pure and easy, and, on proper occasions, pointed and energetic. His narratives were always amusing, his descriptions always picturesque, his humour rich and joyous, yet not without an occasional tinge of amiable sadness. About everything that he wrote, serious or sportive, there was a certain natural 10 grace and decorum, hardly to be expected from a man a great part of whose life had been passed among thieves and beggars, street-walkers and merry-andrews, in those equalized dens which are the reproach of great capitals.

As his name gradually became known, the circle of his acquaintance widened. He was introduced to Johnson, who was then considered as the first of living English writers; to Reynolds, the first of English painters; and to Burke, who had not yet entered parliament, but had distinguished himself greatly by his writings and by the eloquence of his 20 conversation. With these eminent men Goldsmith became intimate. In 1763 he was one of the nine original members of that celebrated fraternity which has sometimes been called the Literary Club, but which has always disclaimed that epithet, and still glories in the simple name of The Club.

By this time Goldsmith had quitted his miserable dwelling at the top of Breakneck Steps, and had taken chambers in the more civilized region of the Inns of Court. But he was still often reduced to pitiable shifts. Towards the close of 1764 his rent was so long in arrear that his landlady one 30 morning called in the help of a sheriff's officer. The debtor, in great perplexity, despatched a messenger to Johnson; and Johnson, always friendly, though often surly, sent back the messenger with a guinea, and promised to follow speedily. He came, and found that Goldsmith had charged the guinea, and was railing at the landlady over a bottle of

Madaira. Johnson put the cork into the bottle, and entreated his friend to consider calmly how money was to be procured. Goldsmith said that he had a novel ready for the press. Johnson glanced at the manuscript, saw that there were good things in it, took it to a bookseller, sold it for £80, and soon returned with the money. The Gent was paid, and the sheriff's officer withdrew. According to one story, Goldsmith gave his landlady a sharp reprimand for her treatment of him; according to another, he insisted on
 10 her joining him in a bowl of punch. Both stories are probably true. The novel which was thus ushered into the world was the *Vicar of Wakefield*.

But, before the *Vicar of Wakefield* appeared in print, came the great crisis of Goldsmith's literary life. In Christmas week, 1764, he published a poem entitled the *Traveller*. It was the first work to which he had put his name, and it at once raised him to the rank of a legitimate English classic. The opinion of the most skilful critics was, that nothing finer had appeared in verse since the fourth book of the
 20 *Dunciad*. In one respect the *Traveller* differs from all Goldsmith's other writings. In general his designs were bad, and his execution good. In the *Traveller*, the execution, though deserving of much praise, is far inferior to the design. No philosophical poem, ancient or modern, has a plan so noble and at the same time so simple. An English wanderer, seated on a crag among the Alps, near the point where three great countries meet, looks down on the boundless prospect, reviews his long pilgrimage, recalls the varieties of scenery, of climate, of government, of religion, of national
 30 character, which he has observed, and comes to the conclusion, just or unjust, that our happiness depends little on political institutions, and much on the temper and regulation of our own minds.

While the fourth edition of the *Traveller* was on the counters of the booksellers, the *Vicar of Wakefield* appeared, and rapidly obtained a popularity which has lasted down to

our own time, and which is likely to last as long as our language. The fable is indeed one of the worst that ever was constructed. It wants, not merely that probability which ought to be found in a tale of common English life, but that consistency which ought to be found even in the wildest fiction about witches, giants, and fairies. But the earlier chapters have all the sweetness of pastoral poetry, together with all the vivacity of comedy. Moses and his spectacles, the vicar and his monogamy, the sharper and his coemogony, the squire providing from Aristotle that relatives 10 are related, Olivia preparing herself for the arduous task of converting a rakish lover by studying the controversy between Robinson Crusoe and Friday, the great ladies with their scandal about Sir Tomkyn's amours and Dr. Burdock's verses, and Mr. Burchell with his "Fudge," have caused as much harmless mirth as has ever been caused by matter packed into so small a number of pages. The latter part of the tale is unworthy of the beginning. As we approach the catastrophe, the absurdities lie thicker and thicker, and the gleams of pleasantry become rarer and rarer. 20

The success which had attended Goldsmith as a novelist emboldened him to try his fortune as a dramatist. He wrote the Good-natured Man, a piece which had a worse fate than it deserved. Garrick refused to produce it at Drury Lane. It was acted at Covent Garden in 1768, but was coldly received. The author, however, cleared by his benefit nights, and by the sale of the copyright, no less than £500, five times as much as he had made by the Traveller and the Vicar of Wakefield together. The plot of the Good-natured Man is, like almost all Goldsmith's plots, very ill constructed. 30 But some passages are exquisitely ludicrous; much more ludicrous, indeed, than suited the taste of the town at that time. A canting, mawkish play, entitled False Delicacy had just had an immense run. Sentimentality was all the mode. During some years, more tears were shed at comedies than at tragedies, and a pleasantry which moved the audience to

anything more than a grave smile was reprobated as low. It is not strange, therefore, that the very best scene in the *Good-natured Man*, that in which Miss Richland finds her lover attended by the bailiff and the bailiff's follower in full court dresses, should have been mercilessly hissed, and should have been omitted after the first night.

In 1770 appeared the *Deserted Village*. In mere diction and versification this celebrated poem is fully equal, perhaps superior, to the *Traveller*: and it is generally preferred to
 10 the *Traveller* by that large class of readers who think, with Bayes in the *Rehearsal*, that the only use of a play is to bring in fine things. More discerning judges, however, while they admire the beauty of the details, are shocked by one unpardonable fault which pervades the whole. The fault we mean is not that theory about wealth and luxury which has so often been censured by political economists. The theory is indeed false: but the poem, considered merely as a poem, is not necessarily the worse on that account. The finest poem in the Latin language, indeed the finest
 20 didactic poem in any language, was written in defence of the silliest and meanest of all systems of natural and moral philosophy. A poet may easily be pardoned for reasoning ill; but he cannot be pardoned for describing ill, for observing the world in which he lives so carelessly that his portraits bear no resemblance to the originals, for exhibiting as copies from real life monstrous combinations of things which never were and never could be found together. What
 • would be thought of a painter who should mix August and January in one landscape, who should introduce a frozen
 30 river into a harvest scene? Would it be a sufficient defence of such a picture to say that every part was exquisitely coloured, that the green hedges, the apple-trees loaded with fruit, the wagons reeling under the yellow sheaves, and the sunburned reapers wiping their foreheads, were very fine, and that the ice and the boys sliding were also very fine? To such a picture the *Deserted Village* bears a great resem-

blance. It is made up of incongruous parts. The village in its happy days is a true English village. The village in its decay is an Irish village. The felicity and the misery which Goldsmith has brought close together belong to two different countries, and to two different stages in the progress of society. He had assuredly never seen in his native island such a rural paradise, such a seat of plenty, content, and tranquillity, as his "Auburn." He had assuredly never seen in England all the inhabitants of such a paradise turned out of their homes in one day and forced to emigrate in a body 10 to America. The hamlet he had probably seen in Kent; the ejectionment he had probably seen in Munster: but, by joining the two, he has produced something, which never was and never will be seen in any part of the world.

In 1773 Goldsmith tried his chance at Covent Garden with a second play, *She Stoops to Conquer*. The manager was, not without great difficulty, induced to bring this piece out. The sentimental comedy still reigned; and Goldsmith's comedies were not sentimental. The Good-natured Man had been too funny to succeed; yet the mirth 20 of the Good-natured Man was sober when compared with the rich drollery of *She Stoops to Conquer*, which is, in truth, an incomparable farce in five acts. On this occasion, however, genius triumphed. Pit, boxes, and galleries, were in a constant roar of laughter. If any bigoted admirer of Kelly and Cumberland ventured to hiss or groan, he was speedily silenced by a general cry of "turn him out," or "throw him over." Two generations have since confirmed the verdict which was pronounced on that night.

While Goldsmith was writing the *Deserted Village* and 30 *She Stoops to Conquer*, he was employed on works of a very different kind, works from which he derived little reputation but much profit. He compiled for the use of schools a *History of Rome*, by which he made £300, a *History of England*, by which he made £600, a *History of Greece*, for which he received £250, a *Natural History*, for which the

booksellers covenanted to pay him 800 guineas. These works he produced without any elaborate research, by merely selecting, abridging, and translating into his own clear, pure, and flowing language what he found in books well known to the world, but too bulky or too dry for boys and girls. He committed some strange blunders; for he knew nothing with accuracy. Thus in his History of England, he tells us that Naseby is in Yorkshire; nor did he correct this mistake when the book was reprinted. He was
 10 very nearly hoaxed into putting into the History of Greece an account of a battle between Alexander the Great and Montezuma. In his Animated Nature he relates, with faith and with perfect gravity, all the most absurd lies which he could find in books of travels about gigantic Patagonians, monkeys that preach sermons, nightingales that repeat long conversations. "If he can sell a horse from a cow," said Johnson, "that is the extent of his knowledge of zoology." How little Goldsmith was qualified to write about the physical sciences is sufficiently proved by two anecdotes.
 20 He on one occasion denied that the sun is longer in the northern than in the southern signs. It was in vain to cite the authority of Maupertuis. "Maupertuis!" he cried, "I understand those matters better than Maupertuis." On another occasion he, in defiance of the evidence of his own senses, maintained obstinately, and even angrily, that he chewed his dinner by moving his upper jaw.

Yet, ignorant as Goldsmith was, few writers have done more to make the first steps in the laborious road to knowledge easy and pleasant. His compilations are widely
 30 distinguished from the compilations of ordinary book-makers. He was a great, perhaps an unequalled, master of the arts of selection and condensation. In these respects his histories of Rome and of England, and still more his own abridgments of these histories, well deserve to be studied. In general nothing is less attractive than an epitome: but the epitomes of Goldsmith, even when most concise, are

always amusing; and to read them is considered by intelligent children, not as a task, but as a pleasure.

Goldsmith might now be considered as a prosperous man. He had the means of living in comfort, and even in what to one who had so often slept in barns and on bulks must have been luxury. His fame was great and was constantly rising. He lived in what was intellectually far the best society of the kingdom, in a society in which no talent or accomplishment was wanting, and in which the art of conversation was cultivated with splendid success. There 10 probably were never four talkers more admirable in four different ways than Johnson, Burke, Beamesclerk, and Garrick; and Goldsmith was on terms of intimacy with all the four. He aspired to share in their colloquial renown: but never was ambition more unfortunate. It may seem strange that a man who wrote with so much perspicuity, vivacity, and grace, should have been, whenever he took a part in conversation, an empty, noisy, blundering rattle. But on this point the evidence is overwhelming. So extraordinary was the contrast between Goldsmith's published 20 works and the silly things which he said, that Horace Walpole described him as an inspired idiot. "Noll," said Garrick, "wrote like an angel, and talked like poor Poll." Chamier declared that it was a hard exercise of faith to believe that so foolish a chatterer could have really written the Traveller. Even Boswell could say, with contemptuous compassion, that he liked very well to hear honest Goldsmith run on. "Yes, sir," said Johnson, "but he should not like to hear himself." Minds differ as rivers differ. There are transparent and sparkling rivers from which it is delight- 30 ful to drink, as they flow: to such rivers the minds of such men as Burke and Johnson may be compared. But there are rivers of which the water when first drawn is turbid and noisome, but becomes pellucid as crystal, and delicious to the taste, if it be suffered to stand till it has deposited a sediment; and such a river is a type of the mind of Gold-

smith. His first thoughts on every subject were confused even to absurdity ; but they required only a little time to work themselves clear. When he wrote they had that time ; and therefore his readers pronounced him a man of genius : but when he talked he talked nonsense, and made himself the laughing-stock of his hearers. He was painfully sensible of his inferiority in conversation ; he felt every failure keenly ; yet he had not sufficient judgment and self-command to hold his tongue. His animal spirits and vanity
 10 were always impelling him to try to do the one thing which he could not do. After every attempt he felt that he had exposed himself, and writhed with shame and vexation ; yet the next moment he began again.

His associates seem to have regarded him with kindness, which, in spite of their admiration of his writings, was not unmixed with contempt. In truth, there was in his character much to love, but very little to respect. His heart was soft even to weakness : he was so generous that he quite forgot to be just ; he forgave injuries so readily that he might be
 20 said to invite them ; and was so liberal to beggars that he had nothing left for his tailor and his butcher. He was vain, sensual, frivolous, profuse, improvident. One vice of a darker shade was imputed to him, envy. But there is not the least reason to believe that this bad passion, though it sometimes made him wince and utter fretful exclamations, ever impelled him to injure by wicked arts the reputation of any of his rivals. The truth probably is, that he was not more envious, but merely less prudent, than his neighbours. His heart was on his lips. All those small jealousies, which
 30 are but too common among men of letters, but which a man of letters who is also a man of the world does his best to conceal, Goldsmith avowed with the simplicity of a child. When he was envious, instead of affecting indifference, instead of damning with faint praise, instead of doing injuries sily and in the dark, he told everybody that he was envious. "Do not, pray, do not talk of Johnson in such

terms," he said to Boswell; "you harrow up my very soul." George Stevens and Cumberland were much far too cunning to say such a thing. They would have echoed the praises of the man whom they envied, and then have sent to the newspapers anonymous libels upon him. Both what was good and what was bad in Goldsmith's character was to his associates a perfect security, that he would never commit such villainy. He was neither ill-natured enough, nor long-headed enough, to be guilty of any malicious act which required contrivance and disguise.

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Goldsmith has sometimes been represented as a man of genius, cruelly treated by the world, and doomed to struggle with difficulties which at last, broke his heart. But no representation can be more remote from the truth. He did, indeed, go through much sharp misery before he had done anything considerable in literature. But, after his name had appeared on the title-page of the Traveller, he had none but himself to blame for his distresses. His average income, during the last seven years of his life, certainly exceeded £400 a year: and £400 a year ranked, among the incomes of that day, at least as high as £800 a year would rank at present. A single man living in the Temple with £400 a year might then be called opulent. Not one in ten of the young gentlemen of good families who were studying the law there had so much. But all the wealth which Lord Clive had brought from Bengal and Sir Lawrence Dundas, from Germany, joined together would not have sufficed for Goldsmith. He spent twice as much as he had. He wore fine clothes, gave dinners of several courses, paid court to venal beauties. He had also, it should be remembered, to the honour of his heart, though not of his head, a guinea, or five or ten, according to the state of his purse, ready for any tale of distress, true or false. But it was not in dress or feasting, in promiscuous amours or promiscuous charities that his chief expense lay. He had been from boyhood a gambler, and at once the most sanguine and the most

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unskilful of gamblers. For a time he put off the day of inevitable ruin by temporary expedients. He obtained advances from booksellers by promising to execute works which he never began. But at length this source of supply failed. He owed more than £2000; and he saw no hope of extrication from his embarrassments. His spirits and health gave way. He was attacked by a nervous fever, which he thought himself competent to treat. It would have been happy for him if his medical skill had been
 10 appreciated as justly by himself as by others. Notwithstanding the degree which he pretended to have received at Padua, he could procure no patients. "I do not practise," he once said; "I make it a rule to prescribe only for my friends." "Pray, dear doctor," said Beauclerk, "alter your rule; and prescribe only for your enemies." Goldsmith now, in spite of this excellent advice, prescribed for himself. The remedy aggravated the malady. The sick man was induced to call in real physicians; and they at one time imagined that they had cured the disease. Still his weak-
 20 ness and restlessness continued. He could get no sleep. He could take no food. "You are worse," said one of his medical attendants, "than you should be from the degree of fever which you have. Is your mind at ease?" "No, it is not," were the last recorded words of Oliver Goldsmith. He died on the third of April, 1774, in his forty-sixth year. He was laid in the churchyard of the Temple; but the spot was not marked by any inscription, and is now forgotten. The coffin was followed by Burke and Reynolds. Both these great men were sincere mourners. Burke, when he heard of
 30 Goldsmith's death, had burst into a flood of tears. Reynolds had been so much moved by the news that he had flung aside his brush and palette for the day.

A short time after Goldsmith's death, a little poem appeared, which will, as long as our language lasts, associate the names of his two illustrious friends with his own. It has already been mentioned that he sometimes felt keenly

the sarcasm which his wild blundering talk brought upon him. He was, not long before his last illness, provoked into retaliating. He wisely betook himself to his pen; and at that weapon he proved himself a match for all his assailants together. Within a small compass he drew with a singularly easy and vigorous pencil the characters of nine or ten of his intimate associates. Though this little work did not receive his last touches, it must always be regarded as a masterpiece. It is impossible, however, not to wish that four or five likenesses which have no interest for posterity 10 were wanting to that noble gallery, and that their places were supplied by sketches of Johnson and Gibbon, as happy and vivid as the sketches of Burke and Garrick.

Some of Goldsmith's friends and admirers honoured him with a cenotaph in Westminster Abbey. Nollekens was the sculptor; and Johnson wrote the inscription. It is much to be lamented that Johnson did not leave to posterity a more durable and a more valuable memorial of his friend. A life of Goldsmith would have been an inestimable addition to the Lives of the Poets. No man appreciated Goldsmith's 20 writings more justly than Johnson: no man was better acquainted with Goldsmith's character and habits; and no man was more competent to delineate with truth and spirit the peculiarities of a mind in which great powers were found in company with great weaknesses. But the list of poets to whose works Johnson was requested by the book-sellers to furnish prefaces ended with Lyttelton, who died in 1772. The line seems to have been drawn expressly for the purpose of excluding the person whose portrait would have most fitly closed the series. Goldsmith, however, has been 30 fortunate in his biographers. Within a few years his life has been written by Mr. Prior, by Mr. Washington Irving, and by Mr. Forster. The diligence of Mr. Prior deserves great praise; the style of Mr. Washington Irving is always pleasing; but the highest place must, in justice, be assigned to the eminently interesting work of Mr. Forster.

NOTES.

(F.)=Forster, (W. I.)=Washington Irving.

(W.)=Boswell's *Life of Johnson* (Globe edition).

(Black.)=Mr. Black's *Life of Goldsmith* (*English Men of Letters*).

Tour=my edition of Boswell's *Tour* in this Series.

(Masson)=Prof. Masson's Memoir in the Globe edition of Goldsmith's Works.

1. 2. **Saxon**, or rather its Gaelic equivalent *Sassenach*, is much used by the native Irish and Scotch to denote an Englishman. Thus, as Sir W. Scott tells us, Johnson was long remembered by the Hebridean natives as the 'Sassenach Mòr' (Great Englishman). For the Irish Celt the word still is apt to excite feelings that even at the time of Johnson's visit, not thirty years after Culloden, were apparently almost entirely extinguished in Scotland—even in the breasts of the most obstinate Jacobites. I have found no mention of persecutions endured by Goldsmith's forebears, but as the family (which came from S. England) produced a series of Protestant clergymen and apparently held staunchly to the old country and its new dynasty, it doubtless had a rough time of it during William's reign; and, perhaps earlier—in such 'troubled times' as those of Wentworth (Stafford) and Cromwell—and in the terrible days of the Irish Massacre.

1. 7. **Elphin**, in Roscommon. For the bishop of Elphin, see below, p. 4.

1. 8. the schoolmaster: the Rev. Oliver Jones, after whom the poet received his Cromwellian name. Charles Goldsmith and Anne Jones were married in May, 1718.

1. 9. **Pallas**: or *Pallasmore*: 'a remote and almost inaccessible Irish village on the southern banks of the river Inny' (F.).

1. 11. **what he could earn**. His stipend, 'with the help of some fields he farmed and occasional duties performed for the

rector of the adjoining parish of Kilkenny West (the Rev. Mr. Green), who was uncle to his wife, averaged £40 a year' (F. 9). In Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, the village preacher (drawn partly perhaps from his father and partly from his brother Henry) is 'passing rich with forty pounds a year.'

1. 13. The date of Goldsmith's birth is given in Johnson's epitaph, on the marble tablet in Westminster Abbey, as Nov. 29, 1731. (See B. 384 and below on 17. 16.) His biographers give Nov. 10, 1728. In the old Family Bible the birth page is unfortunately torn in such a way that the date of Oliver's birth, as also the year of the birth of Henry and Jane (who were probably twins), has disappeared. If, as is now believed, Goldsmith entered Trinity College in June, 1744, 'at the age of fifteen,' it is evident that he must have been born in the latter half of 1728. See below on 3. 14. Ten days before the birth of Goldsmith (i.e. Oct. 31, 1728) Johnson entered Pembroke College, Oxford, being then eighteen.

1. 13. the birth-place: 'an old, half-rustic mansion that stood on a rising ground in a rough, lonely part of the country, overlooking a low tract occasionally flooded by the River Inny' (W. I.). With his predilection for the supernatural, Washington Irving recounts that the old house, afterwards long untenanted, became a resort of the 'good people.' All attempts to repair it were in vain: 'the fairies battled stoutly to maintain possession. A huge mis-shapen hob-goblin used to bestride the house every evening with an immense pair of jack-boots, which he would thrust through the roof, kicking to pieces all the work of the preceding day. The house was therefore left to its fate, and went to ruin.'

1. 27. a living: i.e. of Kilkenny West, a parish adjoining that of Pallasmore. Lissoy is about six miles to the south from Pallasmore, and lies in Co. Westmeath, not Longford, halfway between Ballymahon and Athlone, in the valley of the Inny, and not far from the east shore of Lough Ree. Lissoy was doubtless the germ from which Goldsmith's imagination developed 'Sweet Auburn.' See on 11. 1. The living became vacant by the death of Mr. Green (see on 1. 11.), one of the clerical members of the family. Another—Goldsmith—was Dean of Cloyne. See on 4. 23.

2. 1. The family. As the move took place in 1730, Oliver was yet an infant of about 1½ years. The first-born, Margaret (b. 1719), had died young. Catharine (b. 1721) came next. Then Henry and Jane, the twins (b. probably 1722). Then came Oliver, fifth child, and second son. After the move to Lissoy were born: Maurice (1736), Charles (1737), John (1740). John died young. Charles, after visiting Oliver in London, went to

Jamaica, where he lived until 1804. Maurice became a cabinet-maker and kept a small shop in Charlestown (Roscommon), and 'departed from a miserable life' in 1792. Henry, Oliver's beloved brother and 'earliest friend' (as he calls him in the *Traveller*) 'followed his father's calling and died, as he had lived, a humble village preacher and schoolmaster' (F.). He gained a scholarship at Dublin, and might have perhaps 'done well,' as one says, but about the time of his father's death he accepted the miserable little living of Pallas, with its £40 a year, formerly his father's, and acted also as curate at Kilkenny West and as village schoolmaster at Lissoy. He died at Athlone in May, 1768. The 'village preacher' of the *Deserted Village* is drawn partly from him and partly from his father. Catharine married, secretly, a rich young fellow called Hodson (son of a neighbouring landed proprietor) who was taking private tuition with Henry. Her father was much disturbed at what he regarded as the disgrace, and to clear the family of all suspicion of complicity, he paid over £400 as Catharine's dowry—thus reducing himself to great straits. The Hodsons took over the house at Lissoy after the old man's death. The twin-sister of Henry, Jane, married a poor and 'unprosperous' man named Johnston. In a letter to Henry—who by this time (1759) was experiencing difficulties with an increasing family and a diminutive income—Goldsmith asks for news about 'poor Jenhy,' and adds: 'yet her husband loves her. If so, she cannot be unhappy.' Goldsmith's mother, after the death of the father in 1747, having given up the Lissoy house to Catharine (Hodson), took a small cottage at Ballymahon. This was Goldsmith's home for two years (see 4. 1.). In the above-mentioned letter (1759) he speaks of his mother as 'almost blind'; and she evidently did not live much longer.

2. 4. a maid-servant. She was a 'trusted dependant... related to the family, ... afterwards known as Elizabeth Delap and schoolmistress of Lissoy ... At the ripe age of ninety, when the great author had been thirteen years in his grave, she boasted with her last breath of having taught him his letters' (F.). Her report was: 'Never was so dull a boy. He seemed impenetrably stupid.' As Johnson said to Boswell: 'Goldsmith was a plant that flowered late.'

2. 5. old quartermaster: Thomas—'commonly and irreverently named Paddy'—Byrne. He 'had been educated for a pedagogue, but had enlisted in the army, served abroad during the wars in Queen Anne's time, and had risen to the rank of a quartermaster of a regiment in Spain' (W. I.). He is evidently the 'village master' in the *Deserted Village*, though some of his traits are transferred to the 'broken soldier,' who 'shoulder'd his crutch and show'd how fields were won.'

2. 8. *banishes*: from Gael. *ban-sìth*, 'woman-fairy': the name given in Ireland and parts of Scotland to a female spirit that is believed to 'attach herself to a particular house, and to appear before the death of one of the family' (*Dict.*).

2. 8. *Rapparee chiefs*. *Ráibaire* in Gaelic means 'robber,' with which word it is cognate. Cf. Germ. *Räuber*, *rauben*, *raufen*, etc., Fr. *gober*, and our *reave*, *rob*, etc., and perhaps Lat. *raptor*, *rapere*, etc. The name was given especially to those of the Irish army of James II. who, after the capitulation of Limerick (1691), refused to, or were not permitted to, follow Scarfield and his ten thousand to France, and take service there under James and Louis XIV. (like Dundee's Highlanders after Killbuckie), but who remained in Ireland and took to the hills as outlaws and bandits.

2. 9. *Baldearg* (= 'Red-spot') O'Donnell was by no means a Rapparee. He was descended from the Tircconnail chieftains (of Donegal). He served in the Spanish army, and later under James II.; but after the battle of Aughrim and the capitulation of Limerick he went over with 1200 men to King William, having secured pardon and £500 a year. Of 'galloping Hogan' I can discover nothing. He is more likely to have been a genuine *ráibaire*.

2. 10. *Peterborough*: Charles Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough: 'if not,' says Macaulay, 'the greatest, yet assuredly the most extraordinary character of that age, the king of Sweden (Charles XII.) himself not excepted.' For a description of his character and his brilliant exploits when in command of a body of English and Dutch troops in Spain (1705-7) see Macaulay's *Essay on Lord Mahon's War of the Succession in Spain* (pop. edn., p. 253 sq.). The capture of Monjuich, the key-fortress of Barcelona, was the first and perhaps the most brilliant of these exploits. Stanhope was in command under Peterborough on this occasion. Later (1710) he was overtaken by the Duke of Vendôme at the town Brihuega, and after expending all his ammunition and seeing 'that resistance could produce only a useless carnage,' he capitulated (*Essays*, p. 260).

2. 14. *Irish verses*. 'Another trait of his motley preceptor Byrne was a disposition to dabble in (Irish?) poetry, and this likewise was caught by his pupil.' Some of the young Oliver's—surely not Irish—verses, 'scribbled on small scraps of paper,' were 'conveyed to his mother,' who thereupon determined that he should have a learned education instead of being apprenticed to trade, as his father had intended. Hence it came that Goldsmith was 'devoted to poverty and the Muse' (W. I.). If only it had been to any one—or to all—of the Nine! But alas, it was to the Muse of hackwork that his life was to be mostly devoted.

2. 17. **Furlough Carolan** : called the last Irish bard. He was a descendant of some old Irish tribe, and was born at Nobber, near Newton, in Meath, about 1670. In his eighteenth year he lost his eyesight through smallpox. He was kindly treated by the M'Dermott family (whose praises he sang in his verses), and was provided by them with a horse, a harp, and an attendant. He roamed about the country (mostly in Connaught), playing and singing his own tunes and verses. It is said that he knew no English, or very little. His ~~hose~~ poems were published, with an English translation, by Furlong (1831). Many of his MSS. are in the British Museum. He died in 1738, and was buried at Kilronan. There is a monument to Carolan in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin. It consists of a bas-relief portrait of the bard playing on his harp. One of Goldsmith's minor essays (Globe edn., p. 343) is on Carolan.

2. 21. **contemptuous antipathy**. Macaulay himself—in spite of his admiration for Cromwell and William of Orange—as an enlightened Whig naturally supported the 'Catholic claims'—as well as Unitarian claims and others, including the African Negro's claims—and regarded, he said, 'the Established Church of Ireland as the most absurd of all the institutions of the civilised world.' (It was disestablished in 1869.) See his speech on Maynooth College (pop. edn., p. 175), in which he describes the wealth and luxury of the English Universities, and advocates a more liberal spirit towards the Roman Catholic subject majority as alone able to 'promote the real Union of Great Britain and Ireland.' The Roman Catholic University question in Ireland is at present exciting much discussion.

2. 25. **the Glorious and Immortal Memory** : the form of words in which the Orangemen and Englishmen of Ireland toasted the late King William. (The Jacobite toast was 'the king over the water,' or simply 'the king,' the toaster's wineglass being held over a dessert finger-glass containing water.) Tories, such as Johnson, naturally took side with the Irish Catholics. 'The Irish,' he once exclaimed, 'are in a most unnatural state; for we see there the minority prevailing over the majority. There is no instance, even in the ten persecutions, of such severity as that which the Protestants of Ireland have exercised against the Catholics. ... King William was not their lawful sovereign; he had not been acknowledged by the Parliament of Ireland when they appeared in arms against him' (B. 268). -

2. 27. **the restoration** ... Goldsmith did not trouble himself much about transient phases of politics. He seems seldom to have uttered any opinion on the subject of party politics, though always ready to discuss fundamental questions (such as that of luxury and population) from a theoretic point of view. It was his contempt for all political feuds rather than any special hos-

tility to the Government which induced him, in 1767, to reject with disdain an offer that it made him through Parson Scott. 'I can earn as much as will supply my wants,' he said, 'without writing for any party.' 'And so I left him in his garret,' reported the clerical intriguer.

What Macaulay here refers to is evidently a rather vague expression used (in 1773) by Goldsmith during a conversation with General Paoli, who had spoken of 'happy rebellions.' Goldsmith allowed that, though we have not the phrase, we have the thing. 'Yes—all our happy rebellions!' he exclaimed. 'They have hurt our constitution, and will hurt it, till we mend it by another happy rebellion.' Boswell's comment is: 'I never before discovered that my friend Goldsmith had so much of the old prejudice in him.'

2. 30. was removed. In 1735, when seven years old, he had 'an attack of confluent smallpox, which nearly proved mortal' (F.). In the next year he attended Mr. Griffin's school at Elphin, being lodged and boarded at the house of his uncle, John Goldsmith, who lived at Ballyoughter. When eleven (1739) he was sent to another school at Athlone. Two years later (1741) he was removed to a higher 'academy' at Edgeworthstown, kept by a Rev. Patrick Hughes, where he remained for nearly four years, preparing for the University. The considerable expense of his schooling was borne by various relatives, especially by his uncle, the Rev. Thomas Contarine, who was a widower with one daughter, Jane. Uncle Contarine proved to the last a most generous and long-suffering helper of the improvident Oliver. It was on the way to or from Edgeworthstown, towards the end of his schooldays, that he had (it is said) the ludicrous adventure which many years afterwards he used as the main incident in *She Stoops to Conquer*. Being benighted, and duped by a local wag, he mistook for an inn the private house of a Mr. Featherstone, who, discovering the whimsical mistake, fooled the young fellow to the top of his bent, and did not undeceive him till the next morning.

2. 34. Knowle, or Knole, Park is 'the seat of some Lord or other, near Sevenoaks in Kent. The portrait of Goldsmith is by Sir Joshua Reynolds. It was exhibited by him in the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1770. I believe it can be still seen at Knole by those who care to add 2s. 6d. to the already considerable wealth of the noble proprietor.

3. 8. repartees and couplets. Macaulay evidently alludes to a rather silly improvised couplet about Aesop and his monkey which is quoted by the biographers.

3. 14. seventeenth year. Forster gives 'the 11th of June, 1745'; but later researches, by Dr. Waller are said to prove that Goldsmith was admitted at the age of fifteen, i.e. in his

sixteenth year, on June 11th, 1744. But June, 1744, to Feb., 1749, when Goldsmith took his B.A. degree, gives the rather long period of 4½ years. In the edition of Washington Irving's *Oliver Goldsmith* published by Bell & Sons (1900) the date is given as 1747—an evident error.

3. 15. *sizar*: lit. one who receives 'sises,' i.e. fixed allowances of food; rations. The term was used also at Cambridge: At Oxford the word was 'servitor.'

3. 17: *menial services*. 'He was obliged to sweep part of the courts; to carry up the dishes from the kitchen to the fellows' table, and to wait in hall' (W. I.). He was distinguished from the ordinary commoner by a coarser kind of cap and gown, while the 'fellow-commoner' wore gold braid and gold tassel. Irving relates how, at the beginning of last century, a T.C. sizar, chaffed by the crowd while he was carrying up the food to high-table, hurled the dish and its contents at the head of the sneerers—an act which brought about the abolition of these menial offices. Oliver had to enter as a sizar on account of the expenses caused by Catharine's clandestine marriage. See on 2. 1. How keenly he felt his position may be seen from the letter to his brother Henry (1759), in which he says; 'If he (your son) has ambition, strong passions, and an exquisite sensibility of contempt, do not send him there (to College), unless you have no trade for him except your own.'

3. 22. *name scrawled*. Goldsmith's room in T.C.D. no longer exists; the range of buildings having been reconstructed. Whether the window-pane or window-frame (as W. I. describes it) still exists, I cannot say.

3. 27. *neglected the studies*. Macaulay might have expressed a little more sympathy here, seeing that he himself was plucked for the Mathematical Tripos at Cambridge, and was thus prevented from competing for the highest classical honour—the Chancellor's Medal. Goldsmith's failure was due to a similar reason. He detested mathematics. 'Mathematics,' he wrote later in his *Inquiry* (ch. 13), 'are, perhaps too much studied at our Universities. This seems a science to which the meanest intellects are equal'; and to Malone (B. 139) he said that he 'made no great figure in mathematics, which was a study much in repute there.' The fact is that his tutor, the Rev. Theaker Wilder, was what Forster well calls a 'savage brute'—notorious for bullying pugilistic habits. This tutor endeavoured to force his one branch of learning, mathematics, on the young poet. 'He abused him in the presence of the class as ignorant and stupid; ridiculed him as awkward and ugly; and at times, in the transports of his temper indulged in personal violence' (W. I.). In the *Chinese Letters* (Citizen of the World) the Mail

in Black (who is Goldsmith in a thin disguise) says that his father was mortified at his ill-success at College. 'His disappointment,' he adds, 'might have been partly ascribed to his having overrated my talents, and partly to my dislike of mathematical reasonings at a time when my imagination and memory, yet unsatisfied, were more eager after new objects than desirous of reasoning upon those I knew. This, however, did not please my tutors ...'

3. 30. **pumping on a constable.** One of the undergraduates had been seized by the bailiff. The stronghold of the bailiff was carried by storm, the scholar set at liberty, and the delinquent catch-pole borne off captive to the College, where, having no pump to put him under, they satisfied the demands of collegiate law by ducking him in an old cistern' (W. I.). The affair proved serious in the end. The gownsmen were joined by a mob from the streets, and attacked the prison. Shots were fired by the jailers, and two townsmen were killed. Five students, who had been ringleaders, were expelled, others were publicly reprimanded 'quod seditioni favissent et tumultuantibus open tulissent,' as it is recorded in the College annals; and among the names of these stands that of Oliver Goldsmith.

3. 31. **giving a ball.** This was to celebrate his having gained, as 17th out of 19 successful candidates, an 'exhibition'—better described as a College prize. The supper and dance must have cost him a good deal more than the worth of his prize, viz. 30s. But such mathematical reasonings never appealed to him. In the midst of the festivities the door burst open, and the Rev. Theaker Wilder appeared. He made a rush at the master of the feast and belaboured him, and then sent the lads and lassies a-packing with terrible threats and abuse. The next day Goldsmith sold his books, ran away from College, sneaked about Dublin till his funds were reduced to a shilling, and then set out for Cork, intending perhaps to get across to America as a stow-away. For three days he lived on his shilling and on the produce of as much of his clothing as he could in decency dispense with. Then his indignation began to cool and his courage to sink. He turned his steps homeward—towards Lisaoy. His brother Henry heard of the penitent prodigal, and while he was still far off went to meet him, re clothed him, took him back to T.C.D., and effected 'something of a reconciliation' (says his sister, Mrs. Hodson) with the 'savage brute' of a tutor. In passing, be it noted that this reverend gentleman ultimately met his death 'in the course of a dissolute brawl.'

3. 34. **his father died.** This was early in the year 1747, and before the College riots and the Cork episode. Between his father's death and his B.A. degree (Feb. 27, 1749) was a period of just about two years—a fact not plain from Macaulay's words.

See on 3. 14. The scanty and precarious supplies from home were now at an end, and he would have had to leave College but for the generosity of Uncle Contarine and other friends. His private purse had to depend on occasional loans from good-natured fellow students (an old schoolmate, Beatty, and a cousin, Bob Bryanton), and when these sources failed he would pawn his books or scribble street-ballads, which he sometimes was lucky enough to sell for five shillings each at the Reindeer repository in Mountrath Court. It is said that he used to steal out of College at night to hear his ballads sung in the streets—a fact, if a fact, which seems to have deeply affected the imagination of Mr. Forster. He gives us a rather high-flown half-page, beginning thus: 'Happy night, to him worth all the dreary days!' etc. This experience probably accounts for the particular interest that Goldsmith took in street-singers. On one occasion he hurriedly left a convivial dinner-table and ran out into the street to give money to a poor woman whose voice had touched him.

3. 34. Squalid dissipation seems to be too strong an expression. See on 14. 22. 'Natural indolence and a love of convivial pleasures' is Washington Irving's probably juster expression; nor does there seem any reason to doubt that Goldsmith made a fairly full confession when he said: 'I was a lover of mirth, good-humour, and even sometimes of fun, from my childhood.' He believed in a little natural fermentation as he called it, to clarify the wine. Still, he evidently went a good deal too far at times—as in his Dublin gaming-house escapade. See on 4. 21.

4. 1. humble dwelling: a cottage just outside Ballymahon or the road to Edgeworthstown. See on 2. 1.

4. 2. in his twenty-first year, i.e. in Feb., 1749, when he left College. But two years were spent partly with his mother at Ballymahon, and partly with the Hodsons at Lissoy, or with Henry at Pallas, before he actually applied for ordination. During this period—while, on the advice of Uncle Contarine, he was (nominally) reading for orders—he occupied some of his time in helping Henry with the village school. Many an evening he spent with his cousin Bob Bryanton and other such local Tony Lumpkins at an alehouse ('George Conway's Inn': prototype of the 'Three Jolly Pigeons' in *She Stoops to Conquer*); or he would go off for the whole day, wandering with fishing-rod and flute along the banks of the Inny; or would associate with the priest, who taught him to talk a little French; or would join in village sports—on one of which occasions he won the prize for throwing the sledge-hammer. In the *Deserted Village* are to be found many reminiscences of this time—perhaps, in retrospect at least, the happiest period of Goldsmith's life.

4. 10. *scarlet clothes*. Goldsmith's love for what he himself in the *Deserted Village* calls the 'glaring impotence of dress' is noticed by Boswell (B. 201), who describes him 'strutting about and vaunting his 'bloom-coloured coat.' Goldsmith's tailors' bills, which have been discovered, contain many such extravagant items—among them 'bloom-coloured breeches.' In his *Life of Bechu Nash* he says that by fine dress we are 'awed into respect and esteem.' Whether the story of the scarlet breeches is true (as was asserted by Dr. Sream, Henry's successor in the curacy of Kilkenny West), or whether Goldsmith's usual failure to satisfy examiners was the cause of rejection, or some exaggerated report of college irregularities given by Theaker Wilder, one cannot say for certain. Goldsmith had the strongest repugnance to the prospect of a clerical life. The real reason was doubtless in the main the same that made Milton, at a similar crisis, write: 'Perceiving that he who took orders must subscribe slave... I thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before the sacred office of speaking, bought and begun with servitude and forswearing.' But serious as his reasons probably were, it was not Goldsmith's habit to pose as serious-minded. He had the amiable, though in some respects unfortunate, habit of putting himself in a laughable position—an irresistible tendency to tell ludicrous stories against himself, many of them being half or pure inventions, but retold so often that he himself finally believed them. On this occasion he seems to have given some of his duller friends the impression that his repugnance and his rejection were both due to unorthodox views on clerical dress. Some ten years later he put this whimsical objection into the mouth of the 'Man in Black,' who says to his Chinese friend: 'In order to settle in life, my friends advised (for they always advise when they begin to despise us), they advised me, I say, to go into orders. To be obliged to wear a long wig, when I liked a short one, or a black coat, when I generally dressed, in brown, I thought was such a restraint upon my liberty that I absolutely rejected the proposal... I rejected a life of luxury, indolence, and ease, from no other consideration but that boyish one of dress. So that my friends were now perfectly satisfied I was undone.'

4. 11. *tutor*: in the family of a Mr. Flinn, a rich neighbour. 'He charged a member of the family with unfair play at cards. A violent altercation ensued, which ended in his throwing up his situation' (W. I.).

4. 14. *with much satisfaction*. According to Washington Irving he started for Cork 'without communicating his plans or intentions to his friends.' On leaving Mr. Flinn's he seems to have been in possession of £30—possibly partly won at cards—and was the undisputed owner of a good 'jump horse' (F.).

On his return, after six weeks, he had not a penny in his pocket, and the good plump horse had been exchanged for a poor lean beast to which he had given the name 'Fiddle-back.' His mother was very angry for a time. He mollified her ire by writing a long and humorous account of his adventures (given by W. L., p. 21-24), which is probably to a great extent purely imaginative—as was in all probability much that he afterwards related about his Continental wanderings.

4. 20. a generous kinsman : Uncle Contarine. After losing £50 in a gaming-house, he sneaked about Dublin for some time, afraid to communicate with home. At last he wrote to his uncle. This generous and long-suffering man seems to have been the only one who readily forgave him. His mother, who was with reason intensely mortified, refused to receive him. He therefore went to Pallas, but after a short time even the good-natured Henry quarrelled with him; whereupon he took refuge with his uncle, and idled away his time in scribbling verses and accompanying Jane's harpsichord performances with the rather artless music of his flute.

4. 23. He then thought... Apparently he did not trouble himself with any such thoughts. The suggestion seems to have been first made by Dean Goldsmith of Cloyne—'a sort of cold grandee of the family'—who had somehow got the idea that young Oliver was, in spite of all his escapades, no fool. But the Dean gave nothing but his blessing. 'The small purse,' says Forster, 'was contributed by Mr. Contarine'—whose generosity and faith knew no limits. On his arrival in Edinburgh (autumn of 1752), after leaving his possessions at a lodging and having sallied forth in the evening to see the city, he found (it is said, that he had quite forgotten to ascertain the name of the landlady or of the street, and would have had to wander about all night if he had not met the porter who had carried his box. This is perhaps one of the innumerable stories that he told of himself, and may be partly true or wholly imaginative.

4. 28. to Leyden. Here again we are in the region of myths. He had expressed a wish to 'hear Albinus, the great professor at Leyden,' and it is intelligible that Uncle Contarine furnished the means (£33, apparently) for this, and for a preliminary visit to Paris. But when it came to the point, instead of shipping for Holland or Calais, he secured his passage (according to his own account) in a ship bound for Bordeaux. The ship had to put in at Newcastle. While he and seven others were enjoying themselves in an ale-house, 'enters a serjeant and twelve grenadiers, with their bayonets fixed, and puts us all under the king's arrest. It seems my company were Scotchmen in the French service, and had been in Scotland to enlist soldiers for the French army. I endeavoured all I could to prove my innocence;

however, I remained in prison with the rest a fortnight, and with difficulty got off even then.' If this be true, his arrest was a bit of luck; for the ship was wrecked off the Garonne and all the crew perished. From Newcastle he took ship to Rotterdam, and thence went straight to Leyden. Here he remained about a year—and was often reduced to great straits. He borrowed from a generous fellow-student, Ellis by name, and made things worse by trying to retrieve his fortunes at gaming-tables.

4. 32. with no property but ... 'Bent upon leaving the city where he had now been nearly a year without an effort for a degree, he called upon Ellis and asked his assistance. It was given, but as his evil, or—son's might say—his good genius would have it, he passed a florist's garden on his return, and seeing some rare and high-priced flowers (tulip-roots) which his Uncle Contarine, an enthusiast in such things, had long been in search of he ran in and bought a parcel of the roots, and sent them off to Ireland. Next day he left Leyden, with a guinea in his pocket, one shirt to his back, and a flute in his hand' (F.).

4. 33. He rambled ... There are vague evidences of his having visited Brussels and Antwerp, and of having made some stay at Louvain. Some indeed assert that he obtained there the degree of bachelor of medicine.

4. 34. playing tunes. How much we should believe of Goldsmith's traveller's tales is not easy to determine. His letters from abroad have perished. Macaulay's statement is founded mainly on two well-known passages in Goldsmith's confessedly imaginative writings, namely, the lines in the *Traveller* beginning—

'How often have I led thy sportive choir
With tuneless pipe, beside the murmuring Loire,'

and the description that the 'Philosophic Vagabond' (George, the Vicar's eldest son) gives of his imaginary foreign experiences. 'I had,' he says, 'some knowledge of music, with a tolerable voice, and now turned what was once my amusement into a present means of bare subsistence ... Whenever I approached a peasant's house towards nightfall, I played one of my most merry tunes, and that procured me not only a lodging, but subsistence for the next day. I once or twice attempted to play for people of fashion, but they always thought my performance odious,' etc. (*Vicar of Wakefield*, chap. xx.).

4. 36. as far as Italy. 'The lecture rooms of Germany are so often referred to in his prose writings, that he must have taken them on his way to Switzerland' (F.). From Switzerland he sent Henry a rough sketch of what afterwards was worked up into *The Traveller*. It was at Geneva, if anywhere, that he

must have seen Voltaire, who had lately settled there in his newly-purchased house *Les Délices*. Forster thinks (surely rightly) that Goldsmith crossed by one of the Alpine passes into Piedmont. Washington Irving, following 'early' memoir-writers' (Dr. Percy and others), speaks of his picking up a vulgar, rich pupil at Geneva, son of a London pawnbroker, from whom he, separated at Marseilles. This seems only a variation on the probably fictitious account of the Philosophic Vagabond, who relates how he became tutor at Paris to the heir of a West India—an avaricious young cub—from whom he parted at Leghorn.

5. 1. *noted the taste of the Italians.* 'My skill in music could avail me nothing in a country where every peasant was a better musician than I; but by this time I had acquired another talent, which answered my purpose as well, and this was a skill in disputation. In all the foreign universities and convents there are, upon certain days, philosophical theses maintained against every adventitious disputant; for which, if the champion opposes with any dexterity, he can claim a gratuity in money, a dinner, and a bed for one night. In this manner, therefore, I fought my way towards England...' (*Vicar of Wakefield*, ch. xx.). This is a more heroic kind of picture than Macaulay's; but it seems to have been accepted by Goldsmith's friends. Thus Boswell says: 'He afterwards studied physic at Edinburgh and upon the Continent; and, I have been informed, was enabled to pursue his travels on foot partly by demanding at Universities to enter the lists as disputant, by which, according to the custom of many of them, he was entitled to the premium of a crown when, luckily for him, his challenge was not accepted; so that, as I once observed to Dr. Johnson, he *disputed* his passage through Europe' (B. 139).

5. 9. *as to assert...* 'The person who writes this Memoir, who had the honour and pleasure of being of his acquaintance, remembers to have seen him in a select company of wits of both sexes at Paris...' (Goldsmith's *Memoirs of Voltaire*). He also asserts that Fontenelle and Diderot were present. This is supposed to have been in 1755. Now it seems certain that Voltaire was not at Paris between 1750, when his wrath and indignation drove him thence to Berlin, and the last year of his life, 1778, when he returned to triumph and die. At this time he was newly installed in *Les Délices*, at Geneva, whence he afterwards removed to Ferney, where Boswell visited him, as he asserts, in 1764. [Goldsmith's *Memoirs* only go down to about 1744, when Voltaire was for the first time in Berlin with Frederick the Great. Had he finished there he would have had to account somehow for his assertion.] Forster says that Goldsmith evidently met Voltaire at Geneva, not Paris, and that 'the

error does not vitiate the statement in an integral point.' It is, I think, very much to be doubted whether this was not one of those fictitious statements which Goldsmith repeated until he believed them himself. If the meeting did take place at Geneva, how did Diderot and Fontenelle (at that time nigh 100 years old) manage to be present?

5. 18. *without a friend.* While at Padua, probably, he had heard of the death of his Uncle Contarine, and it was doubtless this that brought him home. His letters to his mother and brother and other relatives seem to have had no response.

5. 18. *a doctor's degree.* 'At Padua he is supposed to have stayed some six months; and here, it is asserted—though in this case also (as also at Louvain) the official records are lost—he received his degree' (F.). A degree was of very easy acquisition in these foreign Universities, but it would have cost money—which he did not possess. And how he could have stayed six months at Padua, it is not easy to see. He started from Edinburgh in February, 1754; was a fortnight at Newcastle, and could not have reached Leyden till about the end of March. At Leyden, according to Forster, he was about a year; and his rambles on foot through the Netherlands and to Paris, with a stay at Louvain long enough for a degree, must have taken at least two months. This brings us to about May, 1755. Then, according to the *Traveller*, he wandered along the Loire, and then found his way (all on foot) to Germany (see on 4. 38), perhaps up the Rhine, past Mainz and Heidelberg and Strasburg, to Basel and Geneva. This must have taken at least six months. From Geneva to Padua by foot, with visits to various Universities and towns, would take at least another two months. So, if he was only a week or two at Paris, we are already brought to the end of 1755 as the date of his arrival at Padua. Now he landed again in Dover on Feb. 1st, 1756. This gives just one month for the return journey—say at least 900 miles on foot, or 30 miles a day—with no stay at all at Padua.

5. 19. 'His flute and his philosophy were no longer of any avail; the English bores cared nothing for music; there were no convents; and as to the learned and clergy, not one of them would give a grant scholar a supper and night's lodging for the best thesis that ever was argued' (W. I.).

5. 22. *strolling player.* 'He even resorted, it is said, to the stage as a temporary expedient, and figured in low comedy at a country town in Kent' (W. F.). Forster suspects it may have been 'in a country barn.' The only foundation for this story seems to be the fact that the Philosophic Magabond (*Vicar of Wakefield*, ch. xx.), on his arrival in England, joins a 'company

of comedians'—something like Wilhelm Meister—and that Goldsmith once wrote an essay on the "Adventures of a Strolling Player" (Globe edition, p. 302).

§. 24. *pounded drugs.* "At one of the towns he passed he implored to be hired in an apothecary's shop" (F.); "but all his medical science gathered in foreign universities could not gain him the management of a pestle and mortar" (W. I.). After reaching London he "went among the London apothecaries and asked them to let him spread plasters for them, pound in their mortars, run with their medicines. But they asked him for a character, and he had none to give" (F.).

§. 26. *Axe Yard.* "Many years afterwards he startled a polite circle at Sir Joshua Reynolds's by humorously dating an anecdote about the time he lived among the beggars of Axe Lane" (W. I.). Forster says it was at "a brilliant circle at Bernet Langton's." The Axe Lane experience probably preceded a post as assistant to Mr. Apothecary Jacob, Fish Street Hill; Monument Yard, on the strength of which, for a time, he had an "elegant little lodging at 3s. a week, with its lukewarm dinner served up between two pewter plates from a cook-shop." After this, according to an early biographer, he "rose from an apothecary's drudge to be a physician in a humble way," and we have glimpses of him, "with cane and wig, 'in a suit of green and gold, miserably old and tarnished,' or in a second-hand, once black, velvet coat, a great rusty patch, in which he covers assiduously with his hat, as he feels the pulse of some poverty-stricken patient." (For a subsequent attempt at doctoring, see on §. 20.) But the fees were probably like those of Johnson's protégé, Dr. Levett, who often got paid with a bit of bread or a glass of gin; so it is not surprising to find him soon afterwards working—perhaps in intervals of medical practice—as corrector of proofs to "a printer and author—who was no one less than Samuel Richardson, author of *Clarissa*. In Richardson's parlour he seems to have met Dr. Young, the author of the celebrated poem *Night Thoughts*."

§. 28. *usher of a school.* Goldsmith had unearthed several old Edinburgh fellow-students in London: a Dr. Sleigh, who helped him liberally, "sharing his purse and friendship with me"; a Dr. Farr, who gives us a description of Goldsmith in his "rusty full-trimmed black suit" and tells us of a tragedy that the poet had in hand and of some "strange Quixotic scheme which he had in contemplation of going to decipher the inscriptions on *written mountains* in Eastern lands; and, thirdly, a young man named Milner, whose father, a Presbyterian minister, kept a school at Peckham, in Surrey. This Dr. Milner offered Goldsmith employment as assistant. "The good people of Peckham," says Forster, "have cherished traditions of Goldsmith House, as

the school was afterwards fondly designated, which may not be safely admitted here. Broken window-panes have been religiously kept for the supposed treasure of his handwriting, and old gentlemen, formerly Doctor Milner's scholars, have claimed, against every reasonable evidence, the honour of having been whipped by the author of the *Vicar of Wakefield*. The only fairly trustworthy information that we possess about Goldsmith as usher at Peckham was obtained from Miss Hester, the Doctor's youngest daughter, who survived till about the end of the century. Most of her anecdotes show Goldsmith in a favourable light, as very good-natured and fond of practical jokes. But he doubtless felt the miseries and humiliations of an usher's position, of which he (as *Philosophic Yachmond*) has given an humorous description in the *Vicar of Wakefield* (ch. xx.), the general summing-up being: 'I had rather be an under-turnkey in Newgate.' Dr. Johnson's experiences and sentiments were somewhat similar in regard to the 'complicated misery' of an usher's life, on which he looked back 'with the strongest aversion and even a degree of horror' (B. 23).

5. 29. bookseller's hack. He acted as usher for only two or three months on this occasion. In April of the same year (1757) the proprietor of the Whig *Monthly Review*, for which Dr. Milner wrote occasionally, dined at Peckham, and was so struck with Goldsmith's literary knowledge that he engaged him as contributor at a small fixed salary with board and lodging. Goldsmith therefore took up his abode with this Mr. Griffiths, 'at the sign of the Dunciad, Paternoster Row.' But after five months he found Griffiths, and still more Griffiths' wife, insufferable and left them, or, as the Griffiths asserted, was ejected for incorrigible idleness and an independence verging on impudence. [Smollett, who was editor of the *Tory Critical Review*, used to sneer at the rival *Monthly* as concocted by 'illiterate booksellers and old women.'] After these five months of contribution to the Whig Review of Mr. and Mrs. Griffiths he seems to have lived for a time in a slum near Salisbury Square, Fleet Street, and to have endeavoured to supplement literary hack-work with medical practice. The doctoring seems to have proved a dead failure; the writing was a little more successful. His essays in the *Monthly* had brought him some repute, and he obtained casual jobs from various publishers—among whom was that Mr. John Newbery, who later proved so good a friend to him (see on 6, 17). During this period—towards the end of 1758—he was visited by his brother Charles, who had been sent to him from Lissoy or Ballymahon in the hope that Mr. Oliver—a rising author—might give him a helping hand upward! Charles seems to have been much disconcerted at the sight of Oliver's slum-lodging—having evidently expected something very different;

and as Oliver proved a broken reed, the young fellow suddenly and secretly, it is said, left him and took ship for Jamaica. (Thirty-four years later he was again in England, and was interviewed by Malone, who found him grown very like what Oliver had been. He returned to Jamaica and died therein 1804. See on 2. 1).

At last—some day early in 1758—hunger and despair prevailed, and Goldsmith resolved to return to usher-drudgery. He made his melancholy journey to Peckham and knocked at Dr. Milner's door. Luckily, or unluckily, Dr. Milner was ill and in want of assistance; so Goldsmith was set in charge of the school, and had to do not only most of the teaching but all the flogging. Milner, who seems to have had a kindly nature, saw how he suffered, and proposed to make application to an East India director of his acquaintance for a medical appointment in India—a proposal rapturously welcomed by Goldsmith as perhaps leading to an escape from ushedom and Grub Street. The application was successful. An appointment to the post of 'medical officer to one of the factories on the coast of Coromandel' was received. He left Peckham, and took a garret in town (see 6. 6). He wrote letters to his prosperous brother-in-law, Hodson, and to others, in the hope of help towards the expenses of outfit and voyage; and with the same object he made great efforts to publish his *Inquiry* (see 6. 18). But 'on a certain night in the beginning of November, 1755, his ascent of Break-neck Steps must have had unwonted gloom. He had learnt the failure of his new hope: the Coromandel appointment was his no longer' (F.). No explanation, says Forster, could be obtained from Dr. Milner—who was now in a dying state—and Goldsmith 'always afterwards withheld allusion to it.' Either his unprepossessing presence, or his medical incompetence, or his inability to pay for his outfit and voyage, seems to have been made a 'convenient excuse for transferring the favour to another.'

6. 1. Surgeon's Hall. 'This seems to have been done in the first ecstasy of his disappointment. The worst part of the business was not that he was plucked ('Oliver Goldsmith not qualified' being the entry discovered in the books of the College of Surgeons), but that having procured security for a new suit of clothes for the examination by promising his old employer Griffiths four articles for the *Monthly*, he not only pawned the books lent him by Griffiths for this purpose, but pawned also (possibly in order to rescue his landlord from bailiffs) the clothes, for which he had not paid.

6. 4. third part of a bed. One of the requisites of an usher, according to the *Philosophic Vagabond's* cousin (*Vicar of Wakefield*, ch. xx.), is to 'lie three in a bed.' In another passage

Goldsmith speaks of the miseries that an usher has to endure from a French teacher, 'who disturbs him for an hour every night in papering and filleting his hair, and stinks worse than a carrion with his rancid pomatums, when he lays his head upon the bolster.'

8. 6., a garret. This he seems to have taken on leaving Peckham for the second time, probably in the summer of 1758, while still hoping to go out to India. The garret was a 'miserably dirty-looking room' (says Bishop Percy, who visited him there, and was accommodated with his only chair) in a filthy house, No. 12 Green Arbour Court, between Old Bailey and Fleet Market. The Court was reached from Farringdon Street by a steep flight of slimy and dilapidated stone stairs, called Break-neck Steps. About 1830 the house was pulled down. Before this happened, it was visited by Washington Irving, who, in his *Tales of a Traveller*, gives a graphic description (repeated in his *Life of Goldsmith*) of this ghastly London slum. Under Goldsmith's brother Charles was disconcerted!

9. 12. six years: i.e. 1758 to 1764, when the 'great crisis' of his life was reached by the publication of the *Traveller* (8. 15).

10. 17. far-famed shop: the bookshop of John Newbery, who had been attracted by Goldsmith's writings, especially by a short-lived little weekly paper called the *Bee*, which Goldsmith had been employed to edit. In company with Smollett, the celebrated novelist, and editor of the Tory *Critical Review*, Newbery called on Goldsmith towards the end of 1759, and engaged him to write for the *Literary Magazine*. From this time Newbery was Goldsmith's chief publisher and one of his best friends. At this time (1759) Newbery was publishing Johnson's *Idler* in his 'Universal Chronicle,' and lending him considerable sums of money. He published Goldsmith's *Traveller* (1764), and his nephew, Francis Newbery, of Paternoster Row, who took over his uncle's business about 1765, published the *Vicar of Wakefield*, *She Stoops to Conquer*, etc. The Newberys made a speciality of children's books. In his *Essay on Milton* Macaulay speaks of 'those pasteboard pictures invented by the friend of children, Mr. Newbery'; and in the *Vicar of Wakefield* Goldsmith introduces his old publisher (who died in 1767) as 'the philanthropic bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard, who has written so many little books for children,' and describes him as 'a good-natured man with a red pimpled face.' Besides selling books, the Newberys were the special vendors of 'James' powder'—for which see on 16. 17. A monograph on Newbery, under the title, 'A bookseller of the Last Century,' has been written (1885) by Mr. Walsh.

11. 18. An Inquiry... See on 5. 29. It was published by Dodaley in March, 1759. It is 'neither more nor less than an

endeavour to prove that criticism has in all ages been the deadly enemy of art and literature, coupled with an appeal to authors to draw their inspiration from nature rather than from books, and varied here and there by a gentle sigh over the loss of patronage' (Black, p. 33). His division of the history of art and literature into three periods—the creative (poetic), the contemplative (philosophic), and the age of critics and commentators—is very well done. It is probably what suggested Macaulay's well-known remarks in his *Essay on Milton*, although he here repays his debt with disparagement. The description of the 'present state of learning in England' is, moreover, full of very just stricture, much of which is quite as applicable to our own days. His age he rightly stigmatises as an age in the main barren of all originality and poetry—an age of criticism, and commentary and metaphysical subtlety. 'It seems the spirit of the times for men here to exhaust their natural sagacity in exploring the intricacies of another man's thought, and thus never to have leisure to think for themselves.' Could anything be more truly said about our present age? It sums up a great deal of what Matthew Arnold and others have told us. Such well-aimed sentences—and they are not few—make Goldsmith's *Inquiry* very well worth perpetuating. As I close the book, another catches my eye: 'The ingenious Mr. Hogarth'—the celebrated painter, who was at one time intimate with Goldsmith—'used to assert that every one *except* the connoisseur was a judge of painting.'

6. 20. *Life of Beau Nash*, which is not ... It has been included by Prof. Masson in the Globe edition of Goldsmith's work. Prof. Masson differs widely from Macaulay in holding the *Inquiry* as 'pure and real Goldsmith,' and the *Richard Nash* as a 'poor compilation.' This it certainly is not. It gives a very graphic picture of fashionable life at Bath under the really remarkable and on the whole salutary reign of Beau Nash—the 'King of Bath,' as the Master of the Ceremonies was called. Though he unfortunately got enticed into collusion with unprincipled proprietors of gaming-tables, he set a fine example by his high sense of honour, his liberality, and his sympathy with distress—of which a proof is the Bath Hospital, founded mainly by his efforts.

6. 22. *History of England*. 'This was published anonymously in 1764. 'It had a great success, and passed through many editions ... The nobleman was supposed to be Lord Chesterfield, so refined was the style' (F.). Lord Orrery also got the credit for it, and so did Lord Lyttelton. Indeed, it was in Forster's day to be seen on bookstalls with 'the name of that grave good lord (Lyttelton) annexed to it.' Lord Chesterfield's celebrated *Letters to his Son* were not published till after his death in 1773.

In 1771 Goldsmith published another *English History*. See on 11. 34.

6. 25. Chinese traveller. These *Chinese Letters*, of which *The Citizen of the World* consists, were contributed (in 1760) to the *Public Ledger*, a little daily paper newly started by Newbery. They were republished in book form in 1762. The Chinaman in London, writing to his friend in China, describes the foibles and follies of English life with a charming naïveté, and with that kind of 'comic irony' which is only possible from the standpoint of a different civilisation. The 'Man in Black,' with whom Lien Chi makes acquaintance and who acts as his cicerone, is Goldsmith in a thin disguise, and the satire of the whole thing is of course Goldsmith's satire, and not such as an oriental would express. [Mr. Black inveighs against the reader who 'thinks himself very clever, and, recognising a bit of a story as having happened to Goldsmith, jumps to the conclusion that such and such a passage is necessarily autobiographical.' Naturally we must make full allowance for Goldsmith's strong imagination, and not attempt to pin him down to either facts or opinions.] In passing, notice that Goldsmith's mind ran a great deal on the East and on lost records (such as the inscriptions on *written mountains*, already mentioned) and on lost oriental arts. He constantly talked about expeditions that he hoped to make some day to India, Persia, and the interior of Asia—and even composed a memorial to Lord Bute, the prime minister, proposing such expeditions—in order to discover these lost arts. 'Of all men,' said Johnson, 'Goldsmith is the most unfit to go out upon such an inquiry, for he is utterly ignorant of such arts as we already possess ... Sir, he would bring home a grinding barrow, such as you see in every street in London, and think that he had furnished a wonderful improvement.'

7. 1. very scantily stored. 'It is amazing,' once exclaimed Johnson, 'how little Goldsmith knows. He seldom comes where he is not more ignorant than anyone else' (B. 259). Still, he called him a 'very great man,' and said 'whatever he wrote, he did it better than any other man could do,' although he 'had been at no pains to fill his mind with knowledge' (B. 452). But Goldsmith was full of information—though not of the kind valued by Johnson or Macaulay—and his essays, as well as his novel and his plays, show a very acute observation of human nature, not merely in its grotesque aspects.

7. 46. introduced to Johnson. This was perhaps on May 31st, 1761, when Dr. Percy (afterwards the Bishop Percy of the *Reliques*), who had already (see on 6. 6) visited him in his Green Arbour alium, brought Johnson to take supper with Goldsmith at his rather 'more civilised' rooms in Wine Office Court, Temple. It is possible, however, that Johnson and Goldsmith

may have met before. On this occasion Dr. Percy, as he himself relates, expressed astonishment at Johnson's unusually spruce appearance. 'Why, Sir,' said Johnson, 'I hear that Goldsmith, who is a very great sloven, justifies his disregard of cleanliness and decency by quoting my practice, and I am desirous this night to show him a better example.' Johnson had already established his literary reputation by his *Dictionary* (1755).

7. 18. Reynolds was introduced to Goldsmith in Johnson's chambers soon after the visit just described; and doubtless the two met afterwards pretty often at the bookshop or back parlour of Davies, in Russell Street, where Johnson and his friends foregathered, and where, just about a year later (May 16, 1762) Boswell had his first meeting with Johnson. In 1768 Reynolds was elected first president of the Royal Academy (when Johnson and Goldsmith were elected professors) and in April, 1769, he was knighted. In 1770 he exhibited at the Academy his portrait of Goldsmith. He plays a considerable rôle in Boswell's *Life of Johnson*.

7. 18. Burke came to London from Dublin in 1750. He 'became secretary to Lord Rockingham (when Prime Minister) and in 1765 entered Parliament under his patronage' (Green). It was by Burke's eloquence that, in 1766, the obnoxious Stamp Act was repealed. (See also Macaulay's *Essay* (popular edition, p. 776) on Chatham, where he is described as 'regarded by the men of letters who quipped together at the Turk's Head as the only match in conversation for Dr. Johnson.' He had already made a name (1756) as the author of the celebrated *Essay on the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*. Johnson himself often spoke of him with admiration, as 'a great man by nature,' 'le grand Burke,' 'an extraordinary man,' 'the first man everywhere,' etc. 'I love his knowledge,' he said, 'his genius, his diffusion and affluence of conversation'... 'That fellow calls forth all my powers.'

7. 22. In 1763. According to Boswell (B. 164) it was in February, 1764. 'Soon after his (Johnson's) return to London, which was in February, was founded that Club which existed long without a name, but at Mr. Garrick's funeral (1779) became distinguished by the title of The Literary Club. Sir Joshua Reynolds had the merit of being the first proposer of it: to which Johnson acceded, and the original members were: Sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Edmund Burke, Dr. Nugent, Mr. Beauclerk, Mr. Langton, Dr. Goldsmith, Mr. Chamier, and Sir John Hawkins. They met at the Turk's Head, in Gerrard Street, Soho, one evening in every week, at seven, and generally continued their conversation till a pretty late hour. By the time Boswell published his *Life of Johnson* (1791) the Club had increased to the number of thirty-five. For Boswell's election,

see B. 261. Further details are given in my notes to Macaulay's *Life of Johnson*. Macaulay himself was a member.

23. Inns of Court. His various lodgings were as follows:
 1758-end of 1760. Green Arbour Court (Break-neck Steps).
 1760-62. Wine Office Court, Temple.
 1762-4. Islington (in order to be near Newbery), in 'country lodgings' kept by Mrs. Fleming. Keeps on, perhaps, the Temple rooms.
 1765. Moves into better rooms, Garden Court, Temple. Spends summers at Islington.
 1767. A room in summer in 'Canonbury Town,' Islington.
 1768. Buys lease of No. 2 Brick Court, Temple, with products of *She Stoops to Conquer* (£400).
 1768-70. Summers in a cottage on Edgeware Road ('Shoemakers' Paradise').
 1771-3. Summers at farmhouse on Edgeware Road.
 1774. March, at the farmhouse. Returns, and dies at Brick Court.

7. 30. the landlady: suspected by Forster to have been Mrs. Fleming, the Islington landlady, with whom Goldsmith had many such difficulties. (Hogarth's portrait of her as 'Goldsmith's hostess' was possibly painted at the Islington lodgings to help Goldsmith in solving some such difficulty.) But Islington was a long way from Johnson's chambers (then probably in Inner Temple Lane), whereas the Temple (Wine Court) room, which Goldsmith evidently kept on and used in the winter during these years, was quite close. The story here told by Macaulay is taken from the account that Boswell professed to have had from Johnson himself—viz., 'I received one morning a message from Goldsmith that he was in great distress, and as it was not in his power to come to me, begging that I would come to him as soon as possible. I sent him a guinea, and promised to come to him directly. I accordingly went as soon as I was dressed, and found that his landlady had arrested him for his rent, at which he was in a violent passion. I perceived that he had already changed my guinea, and had got a bottle of Madeira and a glass before him. I put the cork into the bottle, desired that he would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated. He then told me that he had a novel ready for the press, which he produced to me. I looked into it and saw its merit: told the landlady I should soon return, and having gone to a bookseller, sold it for sixty pounds. I brought Goldsmith the money, and he discharged his rent, not without rating his landlady in a high tone for having used him so ill' (B. 140).

Mrs. Thrale (Madame Piozzi) gives another version, which Boswell inveighs against as utterly untrustworthy. It is certainly inconsistent with his. She says, "I have forgotten

the year, but it could scarcely, I think, be later than 1765 or 1766, that he was called abruptly from our house after dinner, and returning in about three hours, said that he had been with an enraged author, whose lady pressed him for payment within doors, while the bailiffs beset him without; that he was drinking himself drunk with Madeira to drown care, and fretting over a novel which, when finished, was to be his whole fortune; but he could not get it done for distraction, nor could he step out of doors to offer it for sale. Mr. Johnson therefore sent away the bottle, and went to the bookseller, recommending the performance, and desiring some immediate relief; which when he brought back to the writer, he called the woman of the house directly to partake of punch, and pass their time in merriment. It was not till ten years after, I 'dare say'—it could hardly be that, as Goldsmith died early in 1774—that something in Doctor Goldsmith's behaviour struck me with an idea that he was the very man, and then Johnson confessed that he was so. The novel was the charming *Vicar of Wakefield* (*Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson*, p. 119).

In his Essay on Boswell's *Johnson* Macaulay falls foul of Croker, who had asserted that Madame Piozzi was drawing the long bow, seeing that she did not know Johnson till 1765, whereas the *Vicar of Wakefield* was published in 1761. According to Macaulay Johnson got to know the Thrales in 1764 (which, however, seems uncertain), and he states that the *Vicar* was not published till 1766; on which point he is certainly correct.

But later researches (by Messrs. Walsir and Dobson) have unearthed an entry in the accounts of Benjamin Collins of Salisbury (whom some call the printer of the *Vicar*) which states that in 1762 (Oct. 28th) he bought a third part of the novel from Goldsmith for twenty guineas. Moreover, an examination of the Newberys' accounts shows that the other two shares were in the possession of John Newbery's successors (I suppose Francis Newbery, his nephew, who, according to Forster, published the *Vicar*) and Strahan, Johnson's special publisher. The simplest explanation seems to be that in 1764, or 1765 Johnson was, as he stated, summoned by Goldsmith—either from his own chambers or from the Thrales' house—and got Newbery or Strahan to pay up their share as 'immediate relief' (to use Mrs. Thrale's expression), and that he mentioned £60, or 60 guineas, to Boswell as the whole amount obtained for the book, not the amount (probably £20 or 20 guineas) that he himself raised on it from one of the three intending purchasers before it was published, or perhaps before it was quite finished. Some fourteen years later, after Goldsmith's death, Johnson said: 'His *Vicar of Wakefield* I myself did not think would have much success. It was written and sold to a bookseller before his *Traveller*, but published after; so little expectation had the bookseller from it. Had it been

sold after the *Traveller*, he might have had twice as much money for it, though sixty guineas was no mean price' (B. 450).

8. 15. *the Traveller*. A rough sketch of the poem had been sent by him when abroad, nearly ten years before, to his brother Henry. 'The appearance of the *Traveller*,' says Washington Irving, 'at once altered Goldsmith's intellectual standing in the estimation of society; but its effect upon the Club, if we may judge from the account given by Hawkins (Sir John Hawkins, Johnson's biographer and Boswell's special abhorrence) was almost ludicrous. They were lost in astonishment that a "newspaper essayist" and "bookseller's drudge" should have written such a poem. On the evening of its announcement Goldsmith had gone away early, after rattling away as usual," and they knew not how to reconcile his heedless garrulity with the serene beauty, the easy grace, the sound good sense, and the occasional elevation of his poetry ... Boswell, who was absent from England at this time, was astonished on his return to find Goldsmith, whom he had so much undervalued, suddenly elevated almost to a par with his idol. He accounted for it by concluding that much, both of the sentiments and the expression of the poem, had been derived from conversations with Johnson. "He imitates you, Sir," said this incarnation of toadyism. "Why no, Sir," replied Johnson. "Hawkesworth is one of my imitators, but not Goldsmith. Goldy, Sir, has great merit." "But, Sir, he is much indebted to you for his getting so high in the public estimation." "Why, Sir, he has, perhaps, got sooner to it by his intimacy with me." ... One of the highest testimonials to the charm of the poem was given by Miss Reynolds—the self-opinionated sister of Sir Joshua—who had toasted poor Goldsmith as the ugliest man of her acquaintance. Shortly after the appearance of the *Traveller* Dr. Johnson read it aloud in her presence. "Well," exclaimed she, "I shall never more think Dr. Goldsmith ugly!"

The following passage from Boswell (B. 452) well illustrates Macaulay's statements: 'Goldsmith being mentioned, Johnson observed (in 1778) that it was long before his merit came to be acknowledged; that he once complained to him in ludicrous terms of distress, "Whenever I write anything, the public make a point to know nothing about it"; but that his *Traveller* brought him into high reputation.' In the course of the same conversation Johnson, after praising the *Traveller* highly, said: 'Remember Chamier'—a member of the Club and a distinguished member of the Government—'after talking with him for some time, said, "Well, I do believe he wrote this poem himself; and let me tell you, that is believing a great deal" (see pp. 13. 24). Chamier once asked him what he meant by *slow*, the last word in the first line of the *Traveller*. Did he mean tardiness of

locomotion? Goldsmith, who would say something without consideration, answered "Yes." I was sitting by, and said: "No, Sir; you mean that sluggishness of mind which comes upon a man in solitude." Chamier believed then that I had written the line as much as if he had seen me write it.

Johnson wrote nine lines of the *Traveller*, viz. the 420th ('To stop too fearful and too faint to go') and the last ten except the penultimate couplet. See B. 173.

8. 20. *Dunciad*. 'In March, 1741, Pope published the *New Dunciad*, with the original three books modified, a fourth book added, and Colley Cibber, who had been since 1730 Poet Laureate, replacing Theobald (the editor of Shakespeare) as its hero' (Morley). Macaulay alludes to Johnson's assertion that 'there had not been so fine a poem since Pope's time' (B. 173). It was but natural that Johnson would not mention the poems of Gray (*Elegy*, 1750, *Bard*, 1757, etc.) as exceptions; for Gray was to Johnson a 'mechanical poet,' and a 'dull fellow'; nor is it to be wondered at that the author of *The Vanity of Human Wishes* should have placed Pope's verses in the same class with the *Traveller* as 'poetry.' It should be noticed that Johnson evidently meant by his remark to disparage not only Gray, but also Young, whose *Night Thoughts* had appeared in 1742-3.

The following lively passage from Forster may be well inserted here, as it refers to the period between the appearance of the *Traveller* and that of the *Vicar*:

'Without its dignified doctorial prefix Goldsmith's name is now seldom mentioned (see on 4. 33, 5. 18, and 5. 26); even Newbery is careful to preserve it in his memoranda of books lent for the purposes of compilation; and he does not seem himself to have again laid it wholly aside. Indeed, he now (1765) made a brief effort, at the suggestion of Reynolds, to make positive professional use of it. It was much to have a regular calling, said the successful painter; it gave a man social rank and consideration in the world. Advantage should be taken of the growing popularity of the *Traveller*. To be at once physician and man of letters was the most natural thing possible... Out came Goldsmith accordingly (in the June of this year, according to the account-books of Mr. W. Filby, his tailor) in purple silk small-clothes, a handsome scarlet *toquelaure* buttoned close under the chin, and with all the additional importance derivable from a full-dress professional wig, a sword, and a gold-headed cane... The only instance remembered of his practice was in the case of a Mrs. Sidebotham, whose waiting-woman was often afterwards known to relate with what a ludicrous assumption of dignity he would show off his cloak and his cane, as he strutted, with his queer little figure stuck through as with a huge pin by his sword, into the sick-room of her mistress. At last it one day

happened that, his opinion differing somewhat from the apothecary's in attendance, the lady thought her apothecary the safer counsellor, and Goldsmith quitted the house in high indignation ... 'This seems to have been the close of Doctor Goldsmith's professional practice.' It was perhaps on this occasion that Goldsmith declared he would give up doctoring his friends—or would prescribe only for his friends. See on 16. 12.

8. 34. *Fourth edition.* The *Traveller* was published Dec., 1764, and the *Vicar* in March, 1766. In August, 1765, the fourth edition of the former had appeared; the ninth was printed in the year of Goldsmith's death, 1774. 'It produced a golden harvest to Mr. Newbery, but all the remuneration on record, doled out by his niggard hand to the author, was twenty guineas 1½ (W. I.) This was probably considered as fairly good pay by Goldsmith. It was just elevenpence farthing a line. When he received 100 guineas for his *Deserted Village* (see 10. 7) he is said to have offered to return a part of the money to Griffin, the publisher, having been struck by the remark of a practical-minded friend who had exclaimed that no poetry ever written was worth five shillings a couplet. (This story is given as true by Dr. Percy, who was more likely than anyone else to know, and was repeated by Walter Scott; but Forster rejects it as inconsistent with the fact that Goldsmith had only a few weeks previously not scrupled to accept £500 from Griffin 'on the mere faith of a book—*History of England*—which he had hardly even begun to write.')

9. 2. *The fable* ... Macaulay's dicta on the subject of the *Vicar* have something in common with those of Johnson. 'Miss Burney,' said Mrs. Thrale, 'is fond of the *Vicar of Wakefield*, and so am I. Don't you like it, Sir?' 'No, madam,' replied Johnson, 'it is very faulty; there is nothing of real life in it, and very little of nature. It is a mere fanciful performance.' The much more appreciative accounts given by Washington Irving, by Mr. Forster, and by Professor Masson (Globe edn. of Goldsmith's works) might be consulted. Mr. William Black, in his *Goldsmith* (English Men of Letters) gives a chapter on the subject which is well worth reading. Although he allows that many of Goldsmith's 'expedients are nothing short of desperate,' he expresses deep admiration for this 'perfect picture of domestic life,' this 'simple description of a quiet (?) English home, which went straight to the heart of nations in both hemispheres.'

The *Vicar of Wakefield* was much praised by Goethe, and is—or was but a short time ago—next perhaps to some of Dickens' writings, the English prose classic best known to the educated foreigner; it is, indeed, probably more read abroad than it has been read in England (without compulsion) for a good many years past.

9. 8. *Moses and his spectacles, etc., etc.* It would be worse than useless—except perhaps in abatement of cram and mark-getting—to attempt an explanation of these allusions. If the book is as yet unknown to the student, it should be obtained and read. The humour of Goldsmith's novel is perhaps not so likely to 'excite mirth,' harmless or otherwise, in the modern reader as the coarser humour of Sterne or Fielding.

9. 24. Garrick, the celebrated actor, had been one of the three pupils that came to Johnson's 'academy' near Lichfield. In 1737 he came to London with Johnson, and with him was at one time reduced to great straits. He intended to be a lawyer, but took to the stage, and ere long began to be recognised as one of the first actors of the day. In 1747 he became joint manager of Drury Lane Theatre. For the first performance under Garrick's management Johnson wrote the Prologue—perhaps the best bit of verse that he ever wrote—in which occur some well-known lines on Shakespeare. (For more about Garrick the student should consult Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. I have given some details in my notes on Macaulay's *Life of Johnson*.)

It seems that Goldsmith had originally meant his *Good-natured Man* for Covent Garden, but on the death of the manager, Mr. Rich (well known through his connexion with Gay's 'Beggar's Opera,' which was said to have 'made Rich gay and Gay rich'), he offered it to Garrick. Now Garrick had been annoyed by remarks, made in Goldsmith's *Inquiry*, on theatrical mismanagement and the neglect of contemporary authors. Many irritating provocations ensued, and Goldsmith was highly incensed by what he held to be impertinent alterations in his comedy suggested by Garrick. At last he withdrew the play from Garrick and handed it over to Colman, the new manager of Covent Garden, who was at this time at loggerheads with Garrick on account of some difference that had arisen between them about a very successful play, 'The Clandestine Marriage,' of which they were the joint authors.

9. 28. *coldly received.* Colman was much discouraged at the portentous success of Kelly's sentimental comedy, 'Fanny Delicacy,' which Garrick had just brought out (Jan. 23) at Drury Lane, and his spirits sank lower and lower at each rehearsal of Goldsmith's play, while all the actors, except two, were thoroughly discontented with their parts. Johnson, who had furnished the prologue, was about the only person who gave any encouragement.

On the fateful evening (Jan. 29) Goldsmith, in a suit of 'Tyrian bloom, satin train, and garter-blue silk breeches' (as we learn from some tell-tale tailor's bills) and with a heart palpitating with excitement, took his seat to watch the reception of his comedy.

'Johnson's prologue was solemn in itself, and being delivered by Brinsley (Bensley?) in lugubrious tones, suited to the ghost, in *Hamlet*, seemed to throw a portentous gloom on the audience. Some of the scenes met with great applause, and at such times Goldsmith was highly elated; others went off coldly, or there were slight tokens of disapprobation, and then his spirits would sink. The fourth act saved the piece: it drew down thunders of applause. On the whole, however, both the author and his friends were disappointed, and considered the piece a failure. Poor Goldsmith left the theatre with his towering hopes completely cut down. He endeavoured to hide his mortification, but the moment he was alone with Dr. Johnson, he threw off all restraint and gave way to an almost child-like burst of grief' (W. I.). 'Johnson's prologue even Boswell (B. 188) found depressing. 'Nothing of his writing was given to the public this year (1768) except the Prologue... The first lines are strongly characteristic of the dismal gloom of his mind... Who could suppose it was to introduce a comedy when Mr. Bensley solemnly began:

*Press'd by the load of life, the weary mind
Surreys the general toil of human kind . . . ?'*

§. 28. *benefit nights.* It was performed for ten nights in succession; the 3rd, 6th, and 9th nights were for the author's benefit; the 5th night it was commanded by their majesties; after this it was played occasionally but rarely' (W. I.). Of this £500 Goldsmith at once presented £10 to the actor (Shuter) who had done so much to save the play from failure; then he bought with £400 the lease of a comfortable apartment of three rooms (No. 2 Brick Court, Middle Temple), and spent the rest of his winnings, and probably a good deal more, in 'mahogany sofas, card-tables, book cases, blue mofine curtains, mirrors, Wilton carpets, etc.,' and in such items as a suit of clothes 'lined with silk and furnished with gold buttons'—as we learn from his bills of that period.

§. 33. *False Delicacy.* See on §. 28. Hugh Kelly was (according to Sir T. Hawkins) a stay-maker, who took to writing. He seems to have been a pleasant fellow, and was on good terms with Goldsmith, at whose funeral he showed great emotion. Johnson behaved very bearishly to him—said he didn't want to know a man who had written more than he had read, and told him that he was not disturbed by his presence because he didn't notice him. But after his death (1777) Johnson wrote a prologue (for his widow) to his comedy, *A Word to the Wise* (B. 306).

§. 34. *Sentimentality.* To understand Goldsmith's position and views, one should read his *Essay on Sentimental Comedy* (Globe edn., p. 346). His argument is, briefly, that according to

Aristotle comedy has to do with the 'lower part of mankind' and tragedy with 'the great'; accordingly, comedy treats follies and follies, while tragedy treats misfortunes, there being nothing ridiculous in 'princes or generals' and nothing tragic in 'common people.' ('While we wept for Belisarius, we scarce give halfpence to the beggar, who accosts us in the street. The one has our pity; the other our contempt.') Consequently, when comedy attempts to portray the misfortunes rather than the follies of this 'lower part of mankind,' as is done by 'weeping sentimental comedy' (*la comédie larmoyante*), it is false to its nature and endeavours to excite emotions 'without being truly pathetic.' If the hero is 'but a tradesman' his misfortunes are a subject of perfect indifference to me. Let him go and set up another shop! And however 'good and generous and lavish of their tin money on the stage' these vulgar people may be, they have no claim on my respect or sympathy. Their only *raison d'être* as characters on the stage is that their follies may be ridiculed. This argument of Goldsmith's is, of course, preposterous. Quite indiscriminatingly he uses 'comedy' in the two quite distinct senses of the old word—as the drama of common life and as the comic drama—and the assertion, due to a complete misunderstanding of Aristotle, that there is neither anything ridiculous in the rich and titled, nor anything tragic in the sufferings of the poor and obscure, needs no refutation. Moreover, his contention that comedy and tragedy should not be mixed, and that, as Boileau asserts,

* Le comique, ennemi des soupirs et des pleurs,
N'admet point dans ses vers de tragiques douleurs,

is, of course, refuted by many scenes in Shakespeare's plays. But his main conclusion is doubtless correct. Broad, strong humour, even when perfectly 'fresh and untainted with double entendre, was banished from the stage as 'low'—the cant word of that day—and its place was taken by a mawkish sentimentality, which had nothing in the world to do with real refinement, seeing that it was loudly professed by men whose lives and writings were of the coarsest. Goldsmith was not afraid of this terrible word 'low.' He was content to sit with Aristophanes, and with Shakespeare. With Terence he could exclaim, 'homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto.' In deference to hisses and cries of 'low! low!' he was obliged (as he explained in the Preface to his published play) to 'retrench' the bawdy scenes on the stage, but he printed it all the same; and in his next Comedy, *She Stoops to Conquer*, he laughed to death this silly sentimentalism—and even 'laid its ghost,' as Forster says.

10. 4. in full court dresses. This is, unless I am mistaken, not quite accurate. The bailiff's 'follower,' or 'bull-dog,' Flanigan by name, is 'a little seedy' in regard to apparel, and

when Miss Richland is announced, young Honeywood dresses him up in a blue and gold suit, in order to pass him off as an elegant visitor. • The bailiff himself is not disguised.

10. 7. *Deserted Village*. It was published on May 28th. In the dedicatory letter to Sir Joshua Reynolds (who had been knighted in the April of the preceding year) Goldsmith says: 'The only dedication I ever made was to my brother, because I loved him better than most other men. He is since dead. Permit me to inscribe this Poem to you.' Henry had died while the *Deserted Village* was in its first beginnings, in the spring of 1768. In May of that year Goldsmith was visited by Cooke, a young law-student, his neighbour in the Temple, who has left on record that the poet read to him ten lines of a new poem—and these were lines 5 to 15 of the *Deserted Village*. 'No bad morning's work,' exclaimed Goldsmith, and proposed a 'shoemaker's holiday,' as he used to call a day's outing. It must have been very shortly after this that he learnt of his brother's death, and during the following summer, while at his Edgeware cottage, he seems to have composed a considerable amount of the poem, including the description of the 'village preacher,' who is drawn from memories of his much loved brother and also perhaps from the fainter memories of his father, who had died twenty years before. •

It may be here noted that towards the end of this year (1768) the Royal Academy was instituted. Reynolds was elected president (and knighted a few months later) and Johnson and Goldsmith were made professors respectively of Ancient Literature and Ancient History. About this time (1769) Goldsmith made the acquaintance of Mrs. Horneck, a widow, and her two daughters—an acquaintance which soon ripened into intimacy and afforded him a good deal of happiness, mixed perhaps with other feelings. A few weeks after the appearance of the *Deserted Village* he went with the Hornecks to Paris. In 1771 the elder girl, Catharine (or 'little Comedy'), became Mrs. Bunbury, and at Christmas (after spending the summer once more at Edgeware, where he wrote *She Stoops to Conquer*) he visited the Bunburys at their place, Barton, in Suffolk, and repeated the visit in 1773. He became evidently very much attached to the younger girl, Mary—better known by her nickname, 'the Jessamy bride'—who, after Goldsmith's death, married a Colonel Gwynn. (She died at a great age in 1840, and retained till the last, with evident affection, a lock of Goldsmith's hair which had been given her when he died.)

10. 9. generally preferred. 'Johnson, though he had taken equal interest in the progress of this second poem, contributing to the manuscript the four lines which stand last (B. 174), yet thought it inferior to the *Traveller*. • But Sirge has not confirmed that judg-

ment' (W. L.). Its success was immediate. In less than three months were published five editions. Gray, who was passing the last summer of his life at Malvern, is said to have exclaimed, 'This man is a poet!' Goethe also, who already knew and loved the *Vicar*, welcomed warmly the few poem, and 'at once set to work to translate it.'

10. 11. *Bayes* is the name of the chief character in *The Rehearsal*, a burlesque written (1671) by George Clifford, Duke of Buckingham, assisted by Butler, author *Hudibras*, and others. He is perhaps meant to be a caricature of Dryden, the poet-laureate (i.e. 'wearer of the bays'). Johnson 'held it very cheap.' 'Bayes, in *The Rehearsal*,' he said, 'is a mighty silly character... I question whether it was meant for Dryden, as has been reported' (B. 233). In his *Life of Dryden* he wrote: 'Buckingham characterised Dryden in 1761 by the name of Bayes in *The Rehearsal*... It is said that this farce was originally intended against Davenant.' It was on the subject of this play that Johnson so amusingly translated his first simple expression into pure Johnsonese. 'It has not wit to keep itself sweet,' he said ('very unjustly,' remarks Macaulay in his *Essay*); then, after a pause, he rolled forth the words: 'It has not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction' (B. 649). In Act iii. the satirised poet, whether Dryden or not, exclaims that a plot is of no use 'but to bring in fine things.' The nick-name stuck to Dryden for some time. When he became Roman Catholic he was satirized by Thomas Brown under the same title.

10. 15. *wealth and luxury*. His theory is that wealth and luxury cause depopulation. In the dedication to Sir T. Reynolds he says: 'I know you will object that the depopulation it deplores is nowhere to be seen, and the disorders it laments are only to be found in the poet's imagination. To this I can scarcely make any other answer than that I sincerely believe what I have written; that I have taken all possible pains, in my country excursions for these four or five years past, to be certain of what I allege...' Goldsmith seems to have been rather fond of riding this hobby of his. Some three years later, 'on Tuesday, April 13, 1773,' says Boswell, 'Johnson and Dr. Goldsmith and I dined at General Oglethorpe's. Goldsmith expatiated on the common topic that the race of our people had degenerated, and that this was owing to luxury.' Johnson doubted the fact; believed there are as many tall men in England as ever; asserted that luxury only reaches a small number, and in so far as it does reach the poorer classes it strengthens and multiplies them, instead of causing deterioration and depopulation. At the same time he admitted that commerce and manufactures have in some ways a deteriorating influence both morally and

physically. (See also the last four lines in the *D. V.*, composed by Johnson.) Forster speaks of Adam Smith's *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* as if it had preceded the *Deserted Village* and had turned Goldsmith's attention to the subject. But Adam Smith's celebrated treatise, which was not at all in harmony with Goldsmith's theory, did not appear till 1776. In his *Chinese Letters* (1760) Goldsmith had already proclaimed a theory apparently in diametrical opposition to that of the *D. V.* He had here stated that 'to the accumulation of our wealth may be assigned not only the greatest part of our knowledge, but even of our virtues,' and he describes poets, philosophers, and patriots 'marching in luxury's train.' The fact is that, as Dr. Johnson said, Goldsmith had 'no settled notions upon any subject' and 'no settled system'; or, as Forster puts it, 'he brought to the subject a mind at least so far from prejudice, one way or the other, that at this moment it was open to reason, and at the next to sentiment.' Doubtless wealth and luxury bring very great evils in their train; but, to judge from England of our days, depopulation is not one of these, although a certain amount of eviction and emigration may be due to landlordism and deer forests. However, although this depopulation theory is evidently (and perhaps unfortunately) wrong, there can be no shadow of a doubt that the true greatness of a nation has nothing in the world to do with its wealth and luxury, and that

'states of native strength possess,
Though very poor, may still be very blest.'

10. 19. The finest poem ... : the poem, in six books, of the Roman poet Lucretius on Nature (*De Rerum Natura*). It was written about 55 B.C., when Virgil was a boy of fifteen. It contains a great deal of very fine poetry as well as a most interesting, if at times rather too fanciful, exposition of the atomic doctrine of Democritus which, instead of being 'one of the silliest and meanest systems of natural philosophy' was to a considerable extent a very wonderful anticipation of much that is accepted by modern science. The fine poem of Tennyson on Lucretius should be consulted. What Macaulay means by mean and silly moral philosophy is the philosophy of Epicurus, whom Lucretius followed in ethical and religious matters. This philosophy was indeed founded on the materialistic conceptions of Democritus, but it was noble in its aims, teaching that the highest good is that happiness which is to be attained only by virtue. As he thus made happiness, and not (as the Stoics) virtue itself, the direct object of philosophy, his doctrine naturally suffered misconstruction, and 'Epicureanism' became a by-word. Macaulay merely uses 'finest' and 'silliest' for the sake of vivid contrast. He was probably quite aware that

Democritus and Epicurus were anything but silly—although it is difficult to predicate anything of a man who was ‘provoked at the childish quibbling of Socrates’ and was convinced that the only merit of Plato lay in his style.

11. 1. incongruous parts. ‘Certainly,’ says Prof. Dowden, ‘Auburn is English, but certainly too Paddy Byrne kept school there, and Uncle Contarine or Henry Goldsmith occupied the rectory.’ It is of course easy enough to point out incongruities in most great works of imagination—often very much more striking than in this case. Macaulay, from his juvenile *Essay on Milton* up to the moment that he penned this passage—the last, I think, that he wrote of this nature—never ceased to illustrate the truth of what, in 1838, he said in a letter to Mr. Napier, an editor of the *Edinburgh Review*: ‘I am not successful in analysing the effect of works of genius. I have never written a page of criticism on poetry or the fine arts which I would not burn, if I had the power.’ The fact is that such combinations as are here condemned may exist, and do often exist, in poetry, where (as Lessing has shown in his *Laocoon*) they would be impossible in painting. From Homer, Dante, and Milton many examples might be given. The incongruity that offends ordinary common sense is a very different thing from the incongruity which is a stumbling-block to the imagination. In the *Deserted Village* poetic imagination finds nothing to stumble at.

11. 1. the village. A certain Captain Hogan, we learn from Washington Irving, bought up the estate on which the village and parsonage of Lissoy stood, and gave the name of Auburn (from Goldsmith’s poem) to his mansion and its surroundings. The tenants, it is asserted, had been turned out of their farms by his predecessor, a General Napier, who wished to add to his private grounds. Captain Hogan improved the place so much as to make it a fair resemblance to Goldsmith’s Auburn—and not merely endeavoured to preserve an old hawthorn tree and other natural features that may possibly have been in Goldsmith’s mind when writing his poem, but with very questionable taste renovated or built a village ale-house to which he gave the name of ‘The three jolly pigeons’ (Tony Lumpkins’ ale-house in *She Stoops to Conquer*) and got up the interior after Goldsmith’s description, with ‘whitewashed wall and nicely sanded floor,’ an old clock, and all the rest of it. What the present state of affairs is at Lissoy I do not know—except that the hawthorn tree has long ago been cut up, root and branch, in furnishing relics to literary pilgrims.

* 11. 18. *She Stoops to Conquer*. Colman, who had croaked so persistently about the *Goodnatured Man*, was only prevailed upon (says Johnson) by ‘much solicitation, nay, a kind of force’ to accept the new comedy and ‘predicted its ill success.’ Col-

man was 'most amply punished by its success, and by the taunts, epigrams and censures levelled at him through the press, in which his false prophecies were jeered at; and he was openly taxed with literary jealousy' (W. I.). Till almost the last moment before representation the play had no fixed title. 'We are all in labour for a name for Goldy's play,' wrote Johnson. Sir J. Reynolds proposed 'The Belle's Stratagem.' At length 'The Mistakes of a Night' was fixed upon, to which the words 'She Stoops to Conquer' were prefixed by Goldsmith. 'Stoops indeed?' exclaimed Horace Walpole. 'So she does—that is the Muse.' That exquisite, according to whom Goldsmith was 'silly' and an 'idiot,' had to allow that he was, at least an 'inspired idiot,' and that his 'lowest of all farces' had 'succeeded prodigiously,' although the characters were 'very low and aimed at low humour and not one of them says a sentence that is natural, or marks any character at all.' As regards the title, Forster thinks Goldsmith probably remembered Dryden's line, 'But kneels to conquer, and but stoops to rise.' For the chief incident of the plot see on 2. 30.

11. 25. Kelly. See on 9. 33.

11. 26. Cumberland, Richard, is mentioned a good many times in Boswell's *Life*. He was one of the sentimental comedians of the day, and is supposed to have been mortified at the success of Goldsmith's play, as is testified by one of the many epigrams that appeared in the newspapers, namely:

'At Doctor Goldsmith's merry play
All the spectators laugh, they say,
The assertion, Sir, I must deny,
For Cumberland and Kelly cry.'

Curiously, it is in Cumberland's *Memoirs* that we have the fullest account of the performance, and still more curiously, he writes as if he had been one of the most vociferous of a packed audience in favour of the play. It is thought, however, that he fabricated the account long afterwards, and wished it to be believed that he never had been so foolish as to oppose Goldsmith as a great play-writer. It is known that he resented not being admitted 'as one of the set' by Johnson and his friends. Northcote tells us that 'if he had been in the room, Goldsmith would have flown out of it as if a dragon had been there.'

11. 26. to Mrs. 'Goldsmith had not dared to be present at the first performance (as he had done when the *Goodnatured Man* was acted). He had been overcome by his apprehensions that at the preparatory dinner he could hardly utter a word, and was so choked that he could hardly swallow a mouthful. When his friends trooped to the theatre, he stole away to St. James' Park. There he was found by a friend, wandering up and down the

Mall like a troubled spirit. With difficulty he was persuaded to go to the theatre. He arrived at the opening of the fifth Act and made his way behind the scenes. Just as he entered, there was a slight hiss. "What's that? what's that?" cried Goldsmith to the manager in great agitation. "Pshaw! Doctor," replied Colman sarcastically, "don't be frightened at a squib, when we've been sitting these two hours on a barrel of gun-powder!"... The solitary hiss, which startled Goldsmith, was ascribed by some of the newspaper scribblers to Cumberland' (W. I.).

c Amid the almost universal applause with which the press greeted *She Stoops to Conquer* were a few hostile voices. Of these only one is worth noticing, and that because of the amusing scene that it caused. It was a very gross personal attack, probably written by the notorious Dr. Kenrick, who so often assailed both Goldsmith and Johnson in the most rancorous fashion. (For Kenrick, see my notes to Macaulay's *Life of Johnson*.) Not only did the writer of this letter, which appeared in a newspaper, talk about Goldsmith's surveying 'for hours his grotesque orang-outang's figure in a pier-glass,' but he also alluded to his tender passion for the 'lovely H—k' (i.e. Miss Horneck, the 'Jessamy Bride'). Goldsmith, not being able to discover the anonymous writer, called on Evans, the publisher of the paper, and attacked him with a cane. Evans, a strong-built Welshman, closed with his assailant, and the fray was not ended till 'a lamp hanging overhead was broken and sent down a shower of oil on the combatants,' and poor Goldsmith 'exceedingly battered' was led away home—it is said, by Kenrick himself—and afterwards had to pay £50 to a Welsh charity for the assault. Johnson, who had himself belaboured a publisher (Osborne) with a folio, was pleased. When Boswell asked him about this 'adventure,' he replied, 'Why, Sir, I believe it is the first time he *has beat*; he may have been *beaten* before. This, Sir, is a new plume to him.' And when, to stop the deluge of ridicule and censure that issued from the press, Goldsmith published a manifesto proclaiming the right of a man to take the law into his own hands under such circumstances, Johnson, regarding it as too great a concession to the public, called it a 'foolish thing well done.'

11. 29. that night: i.e. March 15th, 1773.

11. 34. *History of Rome*. This was a job given him in 1767 by the publisher Davies (for whom see on 7. 18). It was to be completed (two octavo volumes of 500 pages each) in two years, and the fee was 250 guineas. It was published in 1769 and abridged in 1772, and had a very large sale for a long period.

11. 34. *History of England*. This was in four volumes. It was also a job given him by Davies in June, 1769, soon after the

successful reception of the *Roman History*, and after he had begun *Animated Nature* for the publisher Griffin; and the stipulated fee was £500 in the first instance. Goldsmith used his former *History of England* a good deal in this compilation (see on 6. 22). Both this and also his *Roman History* (i.e. their abridgments) were to be seen on many school-room and nursery bookshelves some fifty years ago, and may still be found in old-fashioned households. He allows in the Preface that it is compiled from Rapin, Carte, Smollett, and Hume.

11. 35. a *History of Greece*: was not published till after his death, in 1774. *Natural History* (which had the title a *History of Earth and Animated Nature*) was to consist of eight volumes of 400 pages, each at 100 guineas, and it seems indubitable that Goldsmith 'exacted an advance of 500 guineas, which he wholly expended before half a dozen chapters were written' (F.). The 'booksellers' consisted of the publisher Griffin. Goldsmith put aside the *Natural History* in order to finish the *English History* (which was published in August, 1771), and then worked hard at it when in the country (Edgeware), where Boswell found the walls of his room covered with 'curious scraps of descriptions of animals scrawled with a black lead pencil' (B. 239). It was Goldsmith's original intention to translate and annotate Pliny (the Elder), but 'the appearance of Buffon's work induced him to change his plan and make use of that author for a guide and model' (W. I.). He drew also from Mangrove, Gesner, and many others for his facts and fictions. Johnson said: 'Goldsmith, Sir, will give us a very fine book. He will make it as interesting as a Persian tale ... but if he can distinguish a cow from a horse, that, I believe, may be the extent of his knowledge of natural history.' Boswell asserts that Goldsmith 'faithfully transferred' from Buffon the statement that a cow sheds her horns every two years. This is, however, not quite accurate. Goldsmith asserts (*An. Nat.*, iii. 12) that 'at three years old the cow sheds its horns, and new ones arise in their place, which continue as long as it lives.'

42. 9. reprinted: i.e. in an abridged form for schools.

12. 10. nearly hoaxed. Gibbon, the historian (it is said), visited him one day when he was engaged with his *Grecian History*, and, when asked by Goldsmith (too lazy to look it up) the name of the Indian king who gave Alexander so much trouble, he answered jokingly Montezuma, instead of Porus; whereupon, it is said, Goldsmith gravely wrote it down. It seems to me very probable that this is one of the many cases in which Goldsmith purposely misled the laugh against himself in telling the story. As for Montezuma, Macaulay himself has informed us (*Essay on Goldsmith*) that 'every schoolboy knows who imprisoned Montezuma.' Quite as amusing a mistake was com-

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mitted by Macaulay himself in connexion with this selfsame *History of Greece*. In his *Essay on Warren Hastings* he had written, 'It would be unfair to estimate Goldsmith by the *Vicar of Wakefield*.' When the famous blue and yellow *Review* appeared with this new essay of Macaulay's, he was overwhelmed with consternation, and wrote in a fever of agitation to the editor to point out the 'absurd blunder'—the substitution, caused by some fatal slip of the pen, of Goldsmith's *chef-d'œuvre* instead of the intended *History of Greece*. As is usual in such cases, no one else seemed to have noticed, or cared a straw about, the mistake.

12. 14. *gigantic Patagonians, etc.* All these and many other things are quoted from his book by his biographers (see Forster, Bk. IV. chap. x.). There seems somewhat more truth in the gigantic Patagonians than in the preaching monkeys and gossiping nightingales, which (Gessner relates) were heard 'repeating what they had overheard of a long and not remarkably decent conversation between a drunken tapster and his wife.' Dr. Johnson 'used to boast that he had from the first resisted both Ossian and the Giants of Patagonia' (*Tour*, 299). A Captain Byron had brought home reports of these Patagonian giants. 'O, but we have discovered a race of giants!' exclaims Horace Walpole. 'Captain Byron has found a nation of Brobdignags on the coast of Patagonia: the inhabitants on foot taller than he and his men on horseback ...'

1P. 20. *that the sun ..* I confess that this fact was unknown to me—as it perhaps is to some readers who have not had the advantages of Macaulay's schoolboy. I am indebted to Professor Wolfer, the Zürich astronomer, for kindly pointing out to me that from the spring equinox (March 21) to the autumn equinox (Sept. 23) there are 186 days, as against 179 during the time that the sun is to the south of the sidereal equator; and also for the explanation of this fact—which is due to the elliptical form of the earth's orbit round the sun, and the consequent variation in the pace of the sun's apparent motion. Mr. Edward Carpenter, who is an astronomer as well as a poet, writes to me that this fact is 'the basis for the theory that, owing to the winters in the S. hemisphere being so much longer than in the N., enormously greater accumulations of ice must take place round the S. pole than round the N. pole (which seems actually to be the case). Hence great oceans have been formed in S. seas, owing to the centre of gravity of the earth being displaced. Hence also a Noachian deluge every 12,500 years, when conditions are reversed!'

12. 22. *Mauerpertius* was a French savant. In 1736 he headed a scientific expedition which was sent to Lapland in order to discover by measurements the exact length of the degree of

longitude in those latitudes. He was set at the head of the newly instituted Berlin Academy by Frederick the Great. Voltaire, then at Frederick's court (see on 5. 9), was jealous of his influence, and lampooned him in what Macaulay calls the 'exquisitely ludicrous diatribe of Doctor Akakia'—whereat Frederick was incensed, and demanded apology. This caused Voltaire's withdrawal from Berlin, followed by his rough usage at Frankfurt (*Essays*, p. 815).

The story given here by Macaulay is probably not true, for it was told, says Foster (IV. x.), by Kenrick, in revenge for having been compelled to apologise to Goldsmith for one of his many libellous attacks.

12. 28. *this upper jaw.* That the crocodile moves its upper jaw used to be known to every schoolboy who had made a fair start in his Arnold's Greek exercises; but perhaps up-to-date education has allowed the fact to drop out of sight. The story about Goldsmith and his upper jaw is related by William Cooke, the young Irish law-student already mentioned, who had rooms near Goldsmith's at the Temple.

12. 32. *arts of selection ... his histories ...* This agrees on the whole with, and is indeed partly borrowed from, Johnson's remarks on the same subject. In Goldsmith's epitaphs (17. 16), both Greek and Latin, Johnson gives him the titles of natural philosopher and historian (*Physicus, Historicus*), as well as of poet, and asserts that he adorned every subject that he touched. That he meant this seriously is evident from the following passage:

Johnson: 'Whether we take him as a poet, as a comic writer, or as an historian, he stands in the first class.' *Boswell*: 'An historian! My dear Sir, you surely will not rank his compilation of Roman history with the works of other historians of this age?' *Johnson*: 'Why, who are before him?' *Boswell* hereupon mentions Hume, Robertson, and others. Johnson had not read Hume, but he asserts that much of Robertson's history is mere romance and 'verbiage,' and that 'no man will read his cumbrous detail a second time, whereas Goldsmith's plain narrative will please again and again.' Sir, he adds, 'he has the art of compiling, and of saying everything he has to say in a pleasing manner' (B. 260). A further proof of the estimation in which Goldsmith was held as historian is the fact that he was selected as professor in Ancient History to the Royal Academy.

12. 5. *bulks.* Cf. 'to sleep on a bulk in June and amidst the ashes of a glass-house in December' (*Essay on Boswell's Life*, p. 30). The word means a wooden framework (connected with Germ. *Balken*, and our *balk* and *balcony*) and was used for fruit and fish stalls, etc., made of rough rafters, erected at the sides of streets.

13. 12. **Burke ... Garrick.** See on 7. 18 and 9. 24. Topham Beauclerk plays a considerable rôle in Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. He was grandson of the Duke of St. Albans, who was the son of Charles II. and Nell Gwynn. Johnson was introduced to him on a visit to Oxford, and the ponderous moralist and the aristocratic young wit and rake became very intimate afterwards in London. 'What a coalition!' was Garrick's explanation. Beauclerk's wife, 'Lady Di' (somewhat celebrated as an artist), was the divorced Viscountess Bolingbroke, and daughter of the second Duke of Marlborough. Beauclerk had doubtless loose principles—or, as he himself expressed it, if he had good principles he did not wear them out in practice—but he was much loved by Johnson, who was deeply affected by his death (B. 520 and 530). For Lady Di, see B. 281, 295, and *Four* 346; and for Beauclerk see my edition of Macaulay's *Life of Johnson*.

13. 18. **blundering rattle.** Of what Macaulay calls the 'overwhelming evidence' I can give only a few items—mostly from Boswell: and it must be remembered that Boswell had a very poor opinion of Goldsmith, and was utterly unconscious of the fact that Goldsmith was a far greater man than he himself, and in some respects even greater than Johnson.

(1) 'It has been generally circulated and believed,' says Boswell patronisingly, 'that Goldsmith was a mere fool in conversation; but in truth this has been greatly exaggerated. He had no doubt a more than common share of that hurry of ideas which we often find in his countrymen, and which sometimes produces a laughable confusion in expressing them... His mind resembled a fertile but thin soil. There was a quick, but not strong, vegetation of whatever chanced to be thrown upon it. No deep root could be struck... He was very much what the French call *un étourdi*, and from vanity and an eager desire of being conspicuous, he frequently talked carelessly, without knowledge of the subject or even without thought...' And Boswell adds to this some very ill-natured remarks: 'His person was short, his countenance coarse and vulgar... Those who were in any way distinguished excited envy in him to so ridiculous an excess that the instances of it are hardly credible' (B. 139).

(2) 'During this argument Goldsmith sat in restless agitation, from a wish to get in and share. Finding himself excluded, he had taken his hat to go away, but remained for some time with it in his hand... When he was beginning to speak he found himself overpowered by the loud voice of Johnson, who was at the opposite end of the table, and did not perceive Goldsmith's attempt. Thus disappointed of his wish to obtain the attention of the company, Goldsmith in a passion threw down his hat, looking angrily at Johnson and exclaiming in a bitter tone. Take

it!... When Toplady was going to speak, Johnson uttered some sound which led Goldsmith to think that he was beginning again, and taking the word from Toplady. Upon which he seized the opportunity of venting his own envy and spleen: "Sir," said he to Johnson, "the gentleman has heard you patiently for an hour; pray allow us now to hear him!" To which Johnson sternly replied: "Sir, I was not interrupting the gentleman. I was only giving him a signal of my attention. Sir, you are impertinent." In the evening, at the Club, Johnson begged Goldsmith's pardon, and it was at once given—for Goldy was as 'irascible as a hornet' but as placable as Horace—and 'they were on as easy terms as ever,' adds Bayly, 'and Goldsmith rattled away as ever' (B. 20).

(3) "On our way to the Club I regretted that Goldsmith would upon every occasion endeavour to shine... I observed that he had a great deal of gold in his cabinet, but, not content with that, was always taking out his purse. "Yes, Sir," said Johnson, "and that is often an empty purse"... He was still more mortified once when talking in a company with fluent vivacity, and, as he flattered himself, to the admiration of all who were present; a German who sat next him, and perceived Johnson rolling himself as if about to speak, suddenly stopped Goldsmith, saying, "Stay, stay—Doctor Johnson is going to say something!" This was no doubt very provoking, especially to one so irritable as Goldsmith, who frequently mentioned it with strong expressions of indignation' (B. 269). Washington Irving, however, says that Goldsmith quietly retorted by asking the man (who was a Swiss, by name Moser) whether he was quite sure that he would understand Johnson when he *did* say 'something.'

(4) 'Goldsmith,' said Dr. Johnson, 'had no settled notions upon any subject; so he talked always at random. It seemed to be his intention to blurt out whatever was in his mind, and see what would become of it. He was angry too, when caught in an absurdity; but it did not prevent him from falling into another the next minute' (B. 452).

(5) On the other hand we hear of a number of occasions when Goldsmith held his own very well with Johnson, such as when he said that if he, Johnson, tried to write fables he would make the little fishes talk like whales; and when he posed Johnson, who was voraciously devouring rump-steaks, with the question how many such rump-steaks would reach from the earth to the moon. In clever retort and remark Goldsmith was by no means deficient. Nothing could be better than his two remarks about Johnson: that he had 'nothing of the bear but the skin,' and that—a metaphor borrowed from Cibber—'when his pistol misses fire, he knocks one down with the butt end.' Mr. Black goes perhaps a little too far in saying that Goldsmith was too clever for his

company and that, when he poked fun at himself and others and his jokes fell flat, one should conceive him as 'standing aghast, and wondering how it could please Providence to create such hopeless stupidity.'

The truth seems to be that a gift for conversation is a very fallacious test, or rather no test at all, of intellectual power, and in Johnson's circle it was accepted as the sole test. The names of Virgil, Horace and Dante, are enough to remind us sufficiently that intellectual power does not always express itself loquaciously. Hume is said to have had nothing to say for himself. Rousseau describes himself as a fool—*un sot*—in company; and Addison said to a lady who reproached him for his silence: 'Madam, I have but nine pence in ready money, but I can draw for a thousand pounds.' (Addison's conversation with familiar friends was, as Macaulay tells us in his *Essay*, exceedingly charming, but, as Pope said of him, 'before strangers he preserved his dignity by a stiff silence.')

13. 22. *inspired idiot*. 'Mr. Horace Walpole,' says Boswell, 'who admired his writings, said he was an *inspired idiot*' (B. 139 n). Also in his *Letters* (V. 458) Horace Walpole says: 'I have no thirst to know the rest of my countrymen, from the absurd bombast of Dr. Johnson down to the silly Dr. Goldsmith.'

13. 23. *wrote like an angel*... On one occasion, according to one account, when Goldsmith did not appear at the usual hour at the Club some of the members amused themselves by writing epitaphs on the 'late Dr. Goldsmith.' Garrick's own account (given by Forster) is that Goldsmith 'with great eagerness insisted upon trying his epigrammatic powers with Mr. Garrick, and each of them was to write the other's epitaph. Mr. Garrick immediately said that his was finished, and spoke the following dithyrambic extempore:

'Here lies Nolly Goldsmith, for shortness called Noll,

Who wrote like an angel but talked like poor Poll.'

Goldsmith, upon the company's laughing very heartily, grew very thoughtful... and some weeks after produced *Retaliation*' (see on 16. 33). The reading 'and talked' appears in a version given in the *European Magazine*. 'Noll' (short for 'Nolly,' which is short for 'Oliver') was Goldsmith's familiar name from early years.

13. 24. *Chamier*. See on 8. 15.

13. 26. *Even Boswell*... 'Of our friend Goldsmith he said: "Sir, he is so much afraid of being unnoticed, that he often talks lest you should forget that he is in the company"... *Boswell*: "For my part, I like very well to hear honest Goldsmith talk away carelessly." *Johnson*: "Why yes, Sir; but he should not like to hear himself..." (B. 240).

13. 33. **turbid.** Possibly Macaulay remembered that Johnson was rather fond of applying the word 'muddy' to people, meaning 'cloudy in mind, dull,' as he explains it in his *Dictionary*. In a letter to his brother, Goldsmith uses the same image: 'I would compare the man whose youth has been passed in the tranquillity of dispassionate prudence to liquors that never ferment, and consequently continue always muddy.'

Directly Goldsmith took a pen in his hand, as Johnson said, he became another man. 'No man was more foolish when he had not a pen in his hand, or more wise when he had' (Hill, 2. 236 n). Rousseau says almost the same of himself: 'Je fais d'excellentes impromptus à loisir; mais sur le temps je n'ai jamais rien fait ni dit qui vaille. Je fais une fort jolie conversation par la poste, comme les Espagnols jouent aux échecs' (*Confessions*, iii.).

14. 22. **Sensual.** See on 3. 34. The word is perhaps a little too strong. 'Dr. Goldsmith,' said Johnson, 'is one of the first men we now have as an author, and he is a very worthy man too. He has been loose in his principles, but he is coming right' (B. 138). Boswell—forgetting the maxim about glass houses—is less amiable and probably less just: 'Goldsmith, I am afraid, had no settled system, so that his conduct must not be strictly scrutinised.' But he allows that 'his affections were social and generous, and when he had money he gave it away very liberally' (B. 140). In a retort to *Retaliation* Garrick speaks of Goldsmith as 'the rake and the poet.' Washington Irving says this charge 'is not borne out by the course of Goldsmith's life... The strictest scrutiny has detected no settled vice.' He was neither a habitual sot (as Boswell may perhaps be described) nor a habitual gamester nor a libertine.

14. 22. **frivolous** does not seem the right word. Goldsmith loved to play the fool at times, with children of all ages, and was involved, both passively and actively, in many practical jokes, sometimes of rather a rough nature. But neither this nor dancing, masquerading, strutting about in gaudy clothes, etc., constitutes frivolity.

14. 22. **profuse.** Of his profuseness and improvidence many examples might be given besides those that I have already cited. One of his last acts of generous extravagance occurred a few weeks before his death. He gave a very costly dinner to Johnson, Reynolds, and others of his intimates 'who partook with sorrow and reluctance of his imprudent hospitality. The first course vexed them by its needless profusions. When a second, equally extravagant, was served up, Johnson and Reynolds refused to partake of it; the rest of the company, understanding their motives, followed their example, and the

dishes went from the table untasted. Goldsmith felt sensibly this silent and well-intended rebuke' (W. I.).

14. 23. *envy*. See Boswell's allegations given on 13. 18. And yet—let us give the devil his due—even Boswell at times affects, more or less sincerely, to defend him against the more or less authentic accusations of Johnson and others. Thus: 'Talking of Goldsmith, Johnson said he was very envious. I defended him, by observing that he owned it on all occasions. Johnson: "Sir, you are enforcing the charge. He had so much envy, that he could not conceal it. He was so full of it that he overflowed"' (B. 459). 'Upon another occasion, when Goldsmith confessed himself to be of an envious disposition, I contended with Johnson that we ought not to be angry with him: he was so candid in owning it. "Nay, Sir," said Johnson, "we must be angry that a man has such a superabundance of an odious quality that he cannot keep it within his own breast, but it boils over." In my opinion, however, Goldsmith had not more of it than other people have; but only talked of it freely' (B. 270). But Boswell directly afterwards remarks, rather nastily, that Goldsmith was very jealous because Johnson was going to travel in Scotland with him, Boswell.

After Johnson's interview with the king, 1767, 'Dr. Goldsmith,' says Boswell, 'remained unmoved upon a sofa at some distance, affecting not to join in the least in the eager curiosity of the company. He assigned as a reason for his gloom and seeming inattention that he apprehended Johnson had relinquished his purpose of furnishing him with a Prologue to his play (*The Good-natured Man*), but it was strongly suspected that he was fretting with chagrin and envy at the singular honour Dr. Johnson had lately received. At length the frankness and simplicity of his natural character prevailed. He sprung from the sofa, advanced to Johnson, and, in a kind of flutter from imagining himself in the situation which he had just been hearing described, exclaimed: "Well, you acquitted yourself better than I should have done; for I should have bowed and stammered through the whole of it"' (B. 187).

15. 1. *you harrow up*... Boswell frequently accuses Goldsmith of having been jealous of Johnson. 'When his literary reputation had risen deservedly high and his society was much courted, he became very jealous of the extraordinary attention which was everywhere paid to Johnson. One evening in a circle of wits, he found fault with me for talking of Johnson as entitled to the honour of unquestionable superiority. "'Sir," said he, "you are for making a monarchy of what should be a republic"' (B. 269).

15. 2. *Steevens*: well known as an editor of Shakespeare.

He helped Johnson in the revised edition of his annotated Shakespeare (1773). 'Steevens had previously (1766) reprinted twenty of Shakespeare's plays from the early quarto editions.' The edition of Johnson and Steevens in 15 volumes, 1790, often called *Steevens' own*, is that which shows his work at its best' (Dowden).

In Boswell's book we find Steevens in familiar intercourse with Johnson, whose letters to him are full of affection and pleasantry. He was elected into the Club, on Johnson's proposal, in 1774, at the same time as Gibbon. According to Boswell, Steevens was what Macaulay here says, and worse, but Johnson always defended him. On one occasion (B. 464) Beauclerk, according to Boswell, said to Johnson: 'You, Sir, have a friend (naming Steevens) who deserves to be hanged, for he speaks against those with whom he lives on the best terms, and attacks them in the newspapers. He certainly ought to be kicked.' Whereupon Johnson replied that he was not malignant, but only mischievous, and 'would do no man an essential injury.' On another occasion (B. 630), when Steevens was again accused of 'attacking people by anonymous paragraphs in newspapers,' Johnson said: 'Come, come, this is not so terrible a crime; he only means to vex them a little.' In his *Curiosities of Literature* D'Israeli describes Steevens as guilty of 'an unparalleled series of arch-deception and malicious ingenuity,' and quotes instances of his literary impostures.

• 15. 12. Cumberland. See on 11. 26.

15. 12. cruelly treated... Forster, especially, takes this line. At times he really makes himself rather ridiculous by his hysterics, and by his diatribes against a world so lost to the sense of all that is great, and a Christianity that had existed for seventeen centuries and more without ever so far rising to the consciousness of its 'spiritual responsibilities' as to come to the succour of poor Goldsmith when in mortal terror of arrest by the bailiff for not paying his milk-score. Mr. Black, in his *Life of Goldsmith*, ridicules this notion no less than Macaulay, but gives a perhaps fairer account of the matter than Macaulay, who was apparently incapable of seeing far below the surface of human character. 'How Goldsmith managed to live at all,' says Mr. Black, 'is a mystery: it is certain that he must have endured a great deal of want; and one may well sympathise with so gentle and sensitive a creature reduced to such straits, without inquiring too curiously into the causes of his misfortunes. If, on the one hand, we cannot accuse society, or Christianity, or the English government, of injustice and cruelty because Goldsmith gambled away his chances and was called on to pay the penalty, on the other hand we had better inquire into the origin of those defects of character which produced such results.'

15. 28. *Clive*. 'As to Clive, there was no limit to his acquisitions but his own moderation. The treasury of Bengal was thrown open to him. There were piled up immense masses of coin... Clive walked between heaps of gold and silver, crowned with rubies and diamonds, and was at liberty to help himself. He accepted between two and three hundred thousand pounds' (Macaulay's *Clive*). Meer Jaffier afterwards bestowed on Clive about £30,000 yearly income. After his return to England, says Macaulay, 'his whole annual income, in the opinion of Sir John Malcolm, who is desirous to state it as low as possible, exceeded £40,000.'

15. 28. *Sir Lawrence Dundas* made a great fortune as manager of the commissariat and as contractor for the army in Germany during the early part of the Seven Years' War.

15. 29. *dinners*... See on 14. 22.

15. 35. *from boyhood a gambler*. He evidently lost a good deal of money by cards at College, and did a certain amount of gambling with his queer mates at Conway's Inn (4. 2), and we hear of high play at cards at Mr. Flinn's (4. 11), and he lost £50 in a Dublin gaming-house (4. 22). Washington Irving (chap. 44) says—and supports the assertion by quoting from some contemporary of Goldsmith—that the strictest scrutiny has proved that he was *not* a habitual gamester. He was fond of cards, though an unskilful and careless player, and may have too frequently been drawn into playing high stakes with men like Beauclerk. 'Indeed, part of his financial embarrassments may have arisen from losses of this kind, incurred inadvertently (!), not in indulgence of a habit!'

16. 4. *never began*. I remember no case of this, but (as Johnson did in the case of his *Shakespeare* and on other occasions) Goldsmith certainly got large advances of money, and had spent it all, before he had written very much of the promised work. This happened in the case of his *Natural History* and his *History of England*. See on 11. 35 and 8. 34. The fact that he died heavily in debt may have been due to such advances.

16. 5. *more than £3000*. This is evidently taken from what Johnson said in a letter to Boswell: 'Of poor dear Dr. Goldsmith there is little to be told more than the papers have made public. He died of a fever, made, I am afraid, more violent by uneasiness of mind. His debts began to be heavy and all his resources were exhausted. Sir Joshua is of opinion that he owed no less than two thousand pounds. Was ever poet so trusted before?' (B. 277). This letter was written on July 4th, 1774, just three months after Goldsmith's death. It seems almost incredible, but indubitable, that during these three months Johnson wrote to Boswell (whom he had left half a year

before in Scotland) about his precious *Journey to the Western Islands*, but never mentioned Goldsmith, though Boswell had begged him for details. On the next day (July 5th) he was somewhat similarly to Langton: 'He died of a fever, exasperated, as I believe, by the fear of distress. He had raised money and squandered it by every artifice of acquisition and folly of expense. But let not his frailties be remembered; he was a very great man' (B. 277).

16. 7. he was attacked ... The Christmas he had spent at Barton with the Bunburys and Miss Horneck (the 'Jessamy Bride'). Early in 1774 he was feeling so ill that he made up his mind to sell the lease of his Brick Court Apartments, and went to his Edgeware lodging, where he worked for a time at his *Natural History*, and finished it. Here, too, he seems to have added considerably to *Retaliation* (for which see below). But, his state of health becoming worse, he was forced to return to Brick Court about the middle of March.

16. 12. Padua. See on 5. 18, and for his attempts at medical practice see on 8. 20. Forster connects Beauclerk's advice with Goldsmith's unsuccessful attempt at doctoring in the case of Mrs. Sidebotham (F. 3. 11), and says that he left the house in indignation, and declared that he would 'leave off prescribing for his friends,' and that Beauclerk answered, 'Do so, my dear Doctor. Let it be your enemies.' Mrs. Sidebotham is certainly described as 'one of his acquaintances of the better sort'; but he most certainly did not only practice on friends, so the story hasn't much point as thus told. Whence Macaulay derived his version I cannot say.

16. 17. The remedy. This seems to have been the once fashionable anti-febrile nostrum known as 'James' powder,' invented by a Dr. James (of whose *Medicinal Dictionary* Johnson wrote a part. See B. 21, 51, 353, 360). The Newberys, Goldsmith's special publishers, were vendors of this medicine (see on 6. 17). In spite of Johnson's friendship with Dr. James, he did not think highly of his 'compounded medicines' (B. 682).

16. 18. real physicians. A Dr. Hawes was first called. He strongly advised Goldsmith against the James' powders, considering the disease as nervous and not febrile. 'For more than half an hour he sat by the bedside urging its probable danger and vehemently entreating his difficult patient.' Hawes then sent for a Dr. Fordyce for consultation, and he too protested against the James' powders, and sent other medicine. Goldsmith, however, refused to receive this medicine when it arrived, and sent the messenger to Hawes for a packet of his favourite powders. When this arrived he took some, and then declared it was not the right kind, and sent to Newbery's for the genuine article, of which he took several doses. The next evening Hawes

found Goldsmith much^o worse, and very weak. 'He sighed deeply,' reported Hawes, 'and in a very low voice said he wished he had followed my advice.' A day or so afterwards a third doctor, Turton, was called in. Goldsmith^o lingered for a week longer. On Sunday, April 3rd, a favourable crisis seems to have arrived. He fell into a quiet slumber. But, about four o'clock on the Monday morning, April 4th (not 3rd, as Macaulay has it), he woke in strong convulsions, and died about an hour later.

16. 25. the 3rd of April. This is one of Macaulay's rather frequent little inaccuracies. See last note. All the other biographers, if I am not mistaken, give 4th April, which is the date given on the tablets in Westminster Abbey and the Temple vestry chamber. A blunder is also made in the chronological table given in the edition of Forster's *Goldsmith* published by Hutchinson, where it is stated that Goldsmith was 44 years old at his death. He was, as Macaulay says, 45. He entered his 46th year in November, 1773.

16. 27. is now forgotten. In 1837 a marble slab was erected in the Temple Church, on which was stated that Goldsmith 'died in the Temple and was buried in the adjoining churchyard.' It was removed to the vestry chamber when the church was restored. In 1853 Forster, accompanied by Lord Chief Baron Pollock (who had been treasurer of the Temple when the slab was erected), made a careful search for Goldsmith's grave, but could find no trace. The register of burials merely states that 'Oliver Goldsmith, M.B., late of Brick Court, Middle Temple,' was buried on April 9th. Since Forster wrote his book a flat stone, with Goldsmith's name and dates of his birth and death, has been placed in the churchyard, to mark 'approximately' his grave. In 1864 a statue of Goldsmith by Mr. Foley was erected in front of Trinity College, Dublin.

16. 28. by Burke and Reynolds. This again must be, I think, an error. Burke and Reynolds were, according to Washington Irving, 'designated pall-bearers,' with the intention of giving Goldsmith 'a public funeral and a tomb in Westminster Abbey'; but when it was discovered that he had died so much in debt they were deterred by the expense, and decided on a private interment, at which 'none of his illustrious friends were present.' Also Forster says that Reynolds, Burke, Garrick, and others 'were to have borne the pall,' but that it was 'felt that a private ceremony would better become the circumstances in which he had died.' Burke and Reynolds, 'directed arrangements,' and Dr. Hawes 'saw them carried into effect.'

16. 33. a little poem. For the origin of *Retaliation* see on 13. 23, and for the poem itself see Globe edition, p. 594. The

exact chronological sequence of the numerous fictitious epitaphs—first begun perhaps in January or February, 1774—is not quite clear. All the club members seem to have taken a part in the sport except Johnson and Burke. Garrick, it seems, was not content with his first epitaph (given on 13. 23), but 'returned to the charge (even after Goldsmith's death) with a nervous desire to re-retaliate' (F.). Goldsmith's *Retaliation*, as Sir Walter Scott says, 'had the effect of placing the author on a more equal footing with his society than he had ever before assumed.' Its effect was all the greater because of the strong self-control that it showed. 'Without anger, the satire is finished, keen, and uncompromising; the wit is adorned by most discriminating praise, and the truth is all the more merciless for exquisite good manners and good taste' (F.). *Retaliation* had doubtless the effect described by Sir Walter Scott, but it was for only a short time, seeing that Goldsmith died before he had finished it. Manuscript copies of various passages, especially of one containing the character of Garrick, were handed about probably before Goldsmith left for Edgeware (see on 16. 7), where he evidently revised and added to the series of portraits. The unfinished line with which the following description of Sir Joshua ends is perhaps the last thing—certainly the last verse—which he wrote:

'Here Reynolds is laid, and, to tell you my mind,
He has not left a wiser or better behind.
His pencil was striking, resistless, and grand;
His manners were gentle, complying, and bland;
Still born to improve us in every part,
His pencil our faces, his manners our heart.
To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly steering;
When they judged without skill, he was still hard of hearing;
When they talked of their Raphaels, Correggios, and stuff,
He shifted his trumpet, and only took snuff.
By flattery unspoiled &c.'

The portraits of Edmund Burke, of Garrick, and of Reynolds are alone of much interest. Johnson kept aloof from the fray.

17. 15. *cenotaph*. Not quite the right word, for it gives one the notion of an empty tomb, whereas here there is no tomb or anything else that could be empty or full. The monument consists of a tablet with a portrait in relief and an inscription. It was erected in 1776. The spot was chosen by Sir Joshua Reynolds. It was 'the area of a pointed arch over the south door in Poets' Corner, between the monuments of Gay and the Duke of Argyll' (F.).

17. 15. *Nollekens* (1737-1823), the sculptor, was son of the painter 'old Nollekens,' a native of Antwerp. He was born in London, studied under the sculptor Sheemakers, and from 1760

in 1770 worked in Rome, where he gained a prize for his bas-relief of Alexander and Timothea. Garrick and Sterne were among the first English visitors who sat to him for their busts. In 1771, soon after his return to England, he was elected an Associate, and later a member, of the Royal Academy. He was patronized by George III., and soon became the most fashionable portrait-sculptor in England. His busts of Johnson, Pitt, Fox, George III., George IV., and Canning were especially admired. He also attempted imaginative statues and groups, the best of which (Bacchus, Juno, Venus anointing herself, Cupid and Psyche) show excellence in workmanship, but are deficient in conception. Nollekens was always notorious for his great parsimony. As an old man he became a confirmed miser. He is said to have left a fortune of £200,000.

17. 16. Johnson wrote the inscription. It will be found on B. 384, and on the next page is a copy (Dr. Hill gives a reproduction of the original document) of the celebrated Round Robin, with a facsimile of the signatures of Edmund Burke, Gibbon, Joshua Reynolds, Sheridan, and the other members of the Club who ventured to 'humbly' suggest in this form—all thus sharing the danger equally—that Goldsmith's character was perhaps not 'delineated with all the exactness which Dr. Johnson is capable of giving it,' and also that 'the memory of so eminent an English writer' ought to be perpetuated in English. This Round Robin was composed by Burke, and was carried to Dr. Johnson by Sir Joshua. Johnson 'received it with much good humour, but was inexorable. He said 'he would never consent to disgrace the walls of Westminster Abbey with an English inscription, and that he wondered that Warton, a scholar by profession, should have been 'such a fool' as to sign. (Langton, 'like a sturdy scholar,' says Boswell, refused to do so. By the way, when in Scotland the year before Goldsmith's death, Johnson declared that an English epitaph would be a disgrace to Smollett, who had died in Italy in 1771.)

For the date of Goldsmith's birth as given on the Abbey tablet see on 1. 13; and for the description of Goldsmith as an historian and natural philosopher no less than a poet see on 12. 32. Johnson also wrote a Greek epitaph on Goldsmith in two couplets. This may be found, with a bad translation by Croker, in B. 277.

17. 17. that Johnson did not leave. The reason is given by Bishop Percy and by Malone. 'The poems of Goldsmith (whose life I know he intended to write, for I collected some materials for it by his desire) were omitted'—i.e. from the *Lives of the Poets*—'in consequence of a petty exclusive interest in some of them (*She Stoops to Conquer* being one) vested in Mr. Carver, a bookseller' (B. 397 n). Dr. Hill, however, thinks Johnson

meant to write a separate work, and not an addition to the *Lives*. The question of copyright had a good deal to do with the list, which extended from Cowley to Lyttleton, including fifty-three verse-writers, among whom there are only two or three really great poets, a fair sprinkling of clever writers, such as Pope, Addison, and Swift, and a large number of now utterly forgotten postasters.

17. 24. great powers ... with great weaknesses. Compare Johnson's words, given on 16. 5: 'But let not his frailties be remembered: he was a very great man.'

17. 27. Lyttleton, George, b. 1709, was secretary to Frederick, Prince of Wales, when he was at feud with George II. He became a Lord of the Treasury and Lord Chancellor (1757), and was raised to the peerage. His *Letters from a Persian in England to his friend in Ispahan* (1735), probably suggested Goldsmith's *Chinese Letters*. His *Dialogues of the Dead* and *History of Henry II.* (over which he spent thirty years) are his chief works.

It was he, says Dr. Hill, and not Johnson, as Boswell thought, that was called a 'respectable Hottentot' by Lord Chesterfield (see B. 85 and 89). As Boswell informs us (B. 548), 'in the *Life* of Lyttleton Johnson seems to have been not favourably disposed towards that nobleman,' and, following in Boswell's wake, Dr. Hill launches into the question whether it was the preference of Molly Aston or Miss Boothby for Lord Lyttleton which made Johnson jealous—at which Matthew Arnold, in his *Introduction to Six of Johnson's Lives*, with good reason asks: 'What can it matter?'

17. 32. Mr. Prior, afterwards Sir James Prior, was in early life a navy surgeon. He was born in 1790. In 1824 he wrote a *Life of Burke*. His *Life of Goldsmith* appeared in 1837. It is an extensive and careful compilation from earlier biographers, such as Bishop Percy, Malone, Campbell, and other contributors to the *Life* prefixed to early editions of Goldsmith's works. Prior died in 1867.

17. 32. Washington Irving (1783-1859), the well-known American writer, author of *The Sketch Book* (*Rip Van Winkle*, etc.), *Life of Mahomet*, *Conquest of Granada*, etc., wrote and published the first sketch of his *Life of Goldsmith* as an introduction to a selection from Goldsmith's works. This appeared several years before Forster's book. The facts had been collected from various sources, but chiefly from the 'voluminous work of Mr. Prior.' This sketch he wished to revise and republish. But when Forster's book appeared (1848), it incited his spirit of emulation, and caused him to recast and amplify his memoir so as to make it worthier of his favourite author. Irving is sometimes called 'the American Goldsmith.'

17. 33. Forster, John, the son of a Newcastle cattle-dealer, was born in 1812. While yet a lad at school he wrote stories and plays, one of which was acted (1828) in the Newcastle theatre. He was sent to Cambridge, but after one month's trial of the University he left it and studied law in London. His acquaintance with Leigh Hunt and Charles Lamb gave him a good start in literary work. He wrote a series of *Lives of Statesmen* for a Cyclopaedia. Then he was editor of the *Daily News* and the *Examiner*, and became intimate with many of the foremost literary men of the day, such as Browning and Dickens. In 1848 he published his *Life and Adventures of Oliver Goldsmith*, with illustrations by Maclise, Stanfield, Leech, and Doyle. In 1854 he re-published it in two volumes under the title: *Life and Times of Oliver Goldsmith*. Probably on account of Carlyle's criticism, that the central figure had now become too much hidden by its surroundings, he brought out in the next year (1855) an abridged version in one volume. Forster wrote the *Life of Dickens* (1872-4), and began a *Life of Swift*, which, however, he did not live to finish. He died in 1876. He possessed most of the mss. of Dickens' novels, which, together with some 18,000 valuable books, he bequeathed to the nation. They are to be seen at the S. Kensington Museum. His *Life of Goldsmith* is doubtless an accurate and useful compilation, but in tone and style I hold it to be on a much lower level than Washington Irving's book. It seems to me to have no artistic structure, and the language is often banal and slipshod, and often again inflated and hysterical. For his sentiments as to the spiritual responsibilities of Christianity in regard to the payment of milk-scores see on 15. 12.